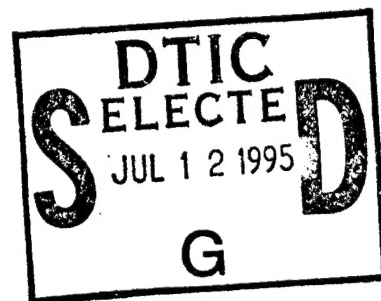


JUNE 1995

Department of Defense
Inspector General

Travel by General Joseph W. Ashy, U. S. Air Force,
From Italy to Colorado in September 1994
And Related Matters



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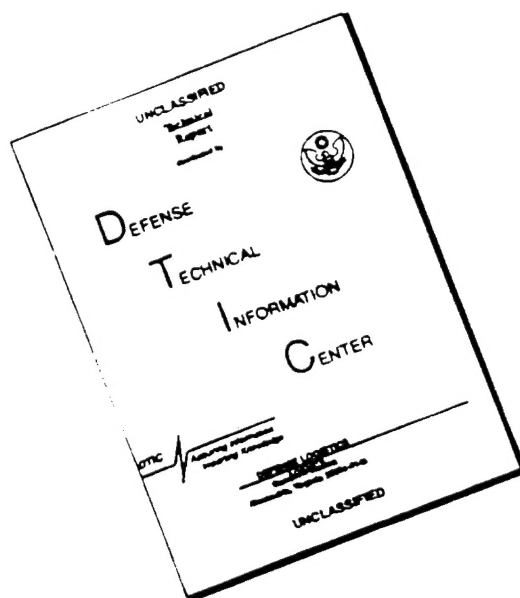
Assistant Inspector General for Departmental Inquiries

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INSPECTOR GENERAL
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
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ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA 22202-2884



JUN 27 1995

Honorable Charles E. Grassley
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510-1501

Dear Senator Grassley:

This is in reply to your letter of December 5, 1994 that requested we investigate the circumstances surrounding the flight on military aircraft by General Joseph W. Ashy, U.S. Air Force, from Naples, Italy to Peterson Air Force Base, Colorado. The report on the investigation is enclosed. Responses to the specific questions in your letter are provided at Appendix 3 of the report.

The investigation found that the dispatch of an empty C-141B from New Jersey to Naples and its nonstop flight from Naples to Colorado were unnecessary because commercial flights and other military flights were available that met General Ashy's stated needs. While the flight was not in keeping with the policy of minimizing costs and ensuring effective use of Government aircraft that underlies Government travel regulations, we found that it conformed to accepted military practices in past cases. In that context and in their desire to accommodate a senior military officer, Air Mobility Command officials dispatched the flight but failed in their responsibility to ensure the effective use of Government resources.

We concluded that General Ashy's flight reflects a culture that apparently lacks adequate cost consciousness in providing services to senior officials. We recommend that the Secretary of Defense and the Secretaries of the Military Departments increase efforts to ensure that military necessity and the reasonableness of incurred cost, as opposed to rank, be the primary considerations in determining whether and in what manner travel and other services are provided to senior officials.

We found that General Ashy's round trip flight from Colorado to Washington was wasteful because he could have accomplished the official purpose of the trip, his promotion, at less expense to the Government by stopping in Washington enroute from Naples to Colorado. We concluded that General Ashy was responsible for that travel and recommend that the Secretary of the Air Force obtain appropriate reimbursement from him.

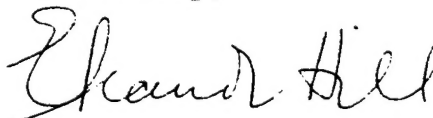
We also found that Air Force public affairs officers provided factually incorrect information to the media with respect to General Ashy's travel, that the Public Affairs

Officers at the Air Mobility Command and the Space Command worked at cross purposes, and that the Air Force Director of Public Affairs did not exercise effective oversight to ensure that the Air Force provided timely, accurate information to the media on a matter of concern to the senior leaders of the Air Force. We recommend that the Secretary of the Air Force review the effectiveness of practices substantially delegating public affairs responsibilities to subordinate organizations. Such a review is especially important in cases where media inquiries concern the personal conduct of the head of the subordinate organization or focus on activities within the subordinate organization that may ultimately reflect on the Air Force as an institution.

In addition, during the investigation we examined several renovation projects at Peterson Air Force Base that were cited as wasteful by the media. Further, we concluded that the shipment by air of general officers' household goods incident to overseas reassignment warrants our additional examination.

Copies of the report will be provided to the other Members of Congress who expressed concern in the matter and the Chairmen and Ranking Minority Members of the Senate Armed Services Committee and House National Security Committee. If we may be of further assistance, please contact me or Mr. John R. Crane, Office of Congressional Liaison, at (703) 604-8324.

Sincerely,



Eleanor Hill
Inspector General

Enclosure

Accession For	
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I. INTRODUCTION

On September 9, 1994, then-Lieutenant General Joseph W. Ashy, U.S. Air Force, his enlisted aide and his cat departed from Naples, Italy as the only passengers aboard an Air Force C-141B aircraft on a nonstop 14 hour flight to his next assignment as the Commander of the United States Space Command (SPACECOM), Peterson Air Force Base, Colorado.

The Air Mobility Command (AMC) dispatched the 200 passenger aircraft from its station at McGuire AFB, New Jersey, solely to transport General Ashy from Naples to Colorado. The AMC also arranged for two aerial refuelings by KC-135 tankers enroute to Colorado.

On September 10, General Ashy received a series of briefings at the SPACECOM regarding his new assignment and responsibilities.

On September 11, General Ashy and his wife flew on an Air Force C-21 executive jet to Washington, DC for a ceremony the next morning presided over by the Air Force Chief of Staff in which General Ashy was promoted to the grade of General (O-10). After the ceremony, General and Mrs. Ashy returned to Colorado on the C-21.

General Ashy assumed command of the SPACECOM on September 13.

In October, Mr. David H. Hackworth, a Contributing Editor for Newsweek, called the Public Affairs Office at the AMC to inquire about the Naples to Colorado flight after he received complaints from two retired officers who had been denied space available transportation on the flight.¹

Throughout November and early December, Mr. Hackworth continued to seek information about the flight from public affairs officers at the Headquarters, Department of the Air Force; the SPACECOM, the AMC, McGuire AFB and Naples. During that same time, Mr. Donald Thrasher, a producer for the ABC News program "20/20" was working with Mr. Hackworth gathering information about the flight.

On December 9, ABC News broadcast its story about the flight and, on December 12, Newsweek published Mr. Hackworth's article. Both pieces characterized the flight as an example of Pentagon waste. In addition, Newsweek reported that Air Force officials had attempted to deceive the media regarding the story

¹ Applicable regulations permit military retirees, among others, to fly aboard military aircraft if space is available and their presence is not otherwise inappropriate.

and that General Ashy had initiated several wasteful construction projects since his arrival at Peterson AFB. A copy of the Newsweek article is at Appendix 1.

On December 5, 1994, Senator Charles E. Grassley wrote the Deputy Inspector General and requested that an investigation be conducted into the facts and circumstances of the flight. A copy of Senator Grassley's letter is at Appendix 2 and the answers to his specific questions are at Appendix 3.

In response to Senator Grassley's request, we examined General Ashy's flights, as well as the Air Force responses to the reporters' questions. Additionally, we evaluated the projects at the SPACECOM identified by Mr. Hackworth and an issue that surfaced during the inquiry regarding the shipment by air of general officers' household goods incident to their reassignments to or from overseas.

During our investigation we interviewed the Secretary of the Air Force, the Chief of Staff of the Air Force and his predecessor, the Deputy General Counsel (now General Counsel) of the Air Force, the Vice Chief of Staff of the Air Force, General Ashy, the Air Force Director of Public Affairs, the SPACECOM Public Affairs Officer, Mr. Hackworth, Mr. Thrasher, and others who had relevant information. Additionally, we reviewed approximately 4,000 pages of documents we obtained from the AMC, the SPACECOM, the NATO command in Naples, and Headquarters, Department of the Air Force.

This report sets forth our findings based on a preponderance of the evidence.

II. THE AIRCRAFT FLIGHTS

A. The flight from Naples to Colorado

1. Facts about the flight

General Ashy originally intended to depart from Naples after his Senate confirmation in July 1994, however, he was required to remain in Naples until the arrival of his replacement. On August 22, 1994 Mrs. Ashy flew on a commercial flight to the United States to visit relatives in Texas. General Ashy transferred command to his successor on September 9.

Some days before the change of command, General Ashy's Executive Officer, Colonel Randall Starbuck, began planning General Ashy's travel to Colorado. Earlier that summer, the Commander, United States Air Force Europe (USAFE), had offered the use of a USAFE aircraft to transport General Ashy to the United States at the completion of his tour in Italy. However,

as Colonel Starbuck began arranging General Ashy's travel, a USAFE staff officer informed him that the USAFE could not provide an aircraft and the Vice Commander of the USAFE gave the same information to General Ashy.²

Colonel Starbuck then determined that commercial airline flights were available from Rome to Colorado on the morning of September 10, which would get General Ashy to Colorado later that day. He informed General Ashy that the commercial flights were available. Thereupon, General Ashy requested Colonel Starbuck call the AMC Headquarters in Illinois to determine if one of its aircraft were available.³ General Ashy said that he asked Colonel Starbuck to make the inquiry for his convenience and because he thought it would be more frugal to fly on a military aircraft.

Colonel Starbuck directed his inquiry to the Director of Operations, Major General James Hinkel, whom he knew from a prior assignment. Colonel Starbuck testified that he asked General Hinkel whether the AMC had flights from Naples, Sigonella, Pisa or Frankfurt available for General Ashy. General Hinkel referred Colonel Starbuck to the element within the AMC Headquarters that schedules flight missions, the Tanker Airlift Control Center (TACC).

Colonel Starbuck stated that he spoke to Colonel William Welser, Deputy Commander of the TACC, and informed him that General Ashy had to depart from Naples after noon on September 9 and arrive in Colorado on the evening of September 10. Colonel Welser's recollection of the conversation differed from Colonel Starbuck's. According to Colonel Welser, Colonel Starbuck told him that commercial flights were not available and there was an urgency associated with General Ashy's travel because before assuming command in Colorado, General Ashy needed to receive the SPACECOM training and attend his promotion ceremony in Washington.

Officers at the AMC stated that they checked their scheduling data and determined no AMC flights were scheduled to depart from Naples or the surrounding airports on September 9.⁴

² At the time of General Ashy's reassignment, the then-current regulation, DoD 4515.13-R, Air Transportation Eligibility, discouraged the use of Operational Support Airlift (OSA) aircraft for reassignment travel. Shortly thereafter, the regulation was revised (in November 1994) and now states that the use of OSA aircraft to provide permanent change of station travel for DoD members or their dependents is not authorized.

³ The AMC operates the Air Force fleet of transport planes and contracts with private carriers for charter flights as needed.

⁴ Although 18 other AMC flights departed from points in Europe for the U.S. on September 9 (5 of which departed after 1:00 P.M.) and 14 flights departed

Colonel Welser stated that because the AMC fleet of C-141 aircraft was heavily committed to a pending operation in Haiti, his subordinates recommended using the C-141 designated as the AMC Commander's aircraft, #70166, to transport General Ashy.⁵ He said they had discussed with Colonel Starbuck whether the AMC should plan a stop on the east coast to clear customs and rest, but were told that a direct flight was preferred because of time constraints.

The AMC Commander at that time, General Ronald Fogleman, testified that since #70166 was designated as his aircraft, he was consulted about its use for General Ashy's travel. He stated that he approved the flight based on the recommendation of his staff and the information they provided him regarding General Ashy's requirements.

On either September 3 or 4, Colonel Welser informed Colonel Starbuck the AMC would provide transportation for General Ashy. Colonel Welser testified that he told Colonel Starbuck the AMC was providing #70166 and that it was currently on a mission to Russia. Colonel Starbuck denied being told the AMC was sending #70166, which he knew from previous assignments to be an aircraft used almost exclusively to transport senior officials. As evidence that he did not know #70166 was being dispatched, Colonel Starbuck noted that he ordered box lunches for General Ashy and his aide to take with them on the flight. General Ashy said that until he saw #70166 in Naples, he expected to fly one of the previously scheduled AMC flights. General Ashy acknowledged that he realized the AMC might have to divert a scheduled flight into Naples to pick him up.

On September 7, #70166 returned to McGuire Air Force Base after a 13 day mission to Russia and, with an augmented crew of 13, departed the next morning for Naples. The aircraft carried no passengers or cargo, but was equipped with pallets containing what is referred to by the AMC as a "distinguished visitor package." The pallets, which had been loaded onto the aircraft for its trip to Russia, contained a number of amenities, including a work area with TV and VCR and a sleeping area with two beds.

General Ashy departed from Naples aboard #70166 at 1:00 p.m. on September 9. He was accompanied by his enlisted aide who had been assigned to continue her duties for General Ashy at the

on September 10, the AMC officers did not consider them for General Ashy because they did not depart from the Naples area.

⁵ The aircraft, assigned to the 305th Airlift Wing, McGuire AFB, New Jersey, is distinctively painted with a white top and gold stripes on its sides. When not employed to fly senior officials or other missions, it is used for crew training.

SPACECOM. General Ashy transported his pet cat on the flight and paid the \$85 fee. Through error on the part of the ground staff, the flight manifest incorrectly identified the aide as a dependent of General Ashy, rather than as a Service member. Two retired officers and their wives were present at the Naples terminal seeking space available transportation to the United States. They were not permitted aboard #70166 because the flight crew mistakenly believed the AMC policy prohibited space available passengers when transporting senior officials. General Ashy stated that he was not consulted about the decision to refuse space to those passengers.

After twice being refueled in flight by the AMC tanker aircraft, #70166 arrived in Colorado on the evening of September 9.

The Air Force cost estimates for the flight, including the tankers used for refueling, ranged from \$116,232 to \$267,624. The lower figure was based on the rate used when the aircraft performs training missions and the higher rate is that charged to non-Government users of the aircraft. The #70166 and the tanker missions were funded as training flights. A commercial ticket from Rome to Colorado would have cost approximately \$650. Cost estimates for the flights are at Appendix 4.

2. Applicable regulations and policies

The use of military aircraft for travel incident to permanent change of station is permitted by applicable regulations, including the Joint Federal Travel Regulations, July 1, 1993; DoD Directive 4500.9, Transportation and Traffic Management, January 26, 1989; DoD Regulation 4515.13-R, Air Transportation Eligibility, January 1980; and Air Force Instruction 24-101, Passenger Movement, July 25, 1994. However, none of the documents specifically authorizes or prohibits the dispatch of a military aircraft overseas solely to transport a senior military officer incident to his reassignment.

The issuance of Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular A-126 (Revised), dated May 22, 1992, was intended to "minimize cost and improve the management and use of Government aircraft." The Circular directed the Secretary of Defense and the Uniformed Services to incorporate its applicable policies in DoD travel regulations.

On February 10, 1993, the President issued a memorandum limiting the circumstances under which senior executive branch officials (specifically excluding members of the military) are authorized to use Government aircraft. The memorandum, however, opened with a general statement of policy regarding travel by Government officials:

"The taxpayers should pay no more than absolutely necessary to transport Government

officials. The public should only be asked to fund necessities, not luxuries, for its public servants."

To implement the guidance in the President's memorandum, the OMB issued Bulletin 93-11, Fiscal Responsibility and Reducing Perquisites, on April 19, 1993. DoD implementing instructions for the OMB Circular A-126, the President's memorandum, and OMB Bulletin 93-11 were issued by the Secretary of Defense in a memorandum, DoD Policy on the Use of Government Aircraft and Air Travel, dated June 10, 1994. The instructions were designed "to make more effective use of DoD airlift resources and minimize costs."

Because officials within the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) viewed OMB Circular 93-11 and OMB Bulletin A-126 as pertaining only to business-type travel by civilian officials, equivalent to temporary duty travel (TDY) for military officers, they limited the June 10 memorandum to TDY travel for civilian and military personnel of the DoD. The memorandum required that generals and admirals (O-10) use military aircraft when on temporary duty travel. It also stated that official travel by other senior officials shall normally be accomplished using commercial transportation unless commercial air is not reasonably available, highly unusual circumstances present a clear and present danger, an emergency exists, use of Government aircraft is more cost effective, or other compelling operational considerations make commercial transportation unacceptable.⁶

Permanent change of station (PCS) travel is also specifically addressed by paragraph 5116 of Volume I, Joint Federal Travel Regulations, which states that for permanent changes of stations from outside the Continental United States, military members are entitled to transportation by Government aircraft or vessel, if available.

Finally, Air Force Instruction 24-101, Passenger Movement, states that the primary consideration for arranging travel for Air Force personnel is "to satisfy the traveler's mission requirements at the lowest overall cost."

3. Standard custom and practice

At the outset of the inquiry, we recognized the need to determine the extent to which the circumstances of the flight

⁶ On May 9, 1995, the Deputy Secretary of Defense issued a memorandum superseding the memorandum of June 10, 1994. In pertinent part, the new memorandum establishes policy for travel incident to reassignment, as well as travel incident to temporary duty. It requires generals and admirals (O-10) to use military aircraft for official travel in both categories.

were atypical. We obtained information from the Military Departments regarding the transportation of generals/admirals (O-10) to or from reassignments overseas. We found that on 12 of 15 occasions generals or admirals traveled on military aircraft, and in 11 of those cases the aircraft were dispatched for the sole purpose of transporting the senior official.⁷

4. Discussion

During the inquiry, a number of Air Force officials sought to justify the flight based on their understanding of the urgency of General Ashy's need to travel to Colorado. In contrast, General Ashy consistently stated, before and during the inquiry, that commercial arrangements were "doable." He testified that he directed Colonel Starbuck to see whether the AMC could transport him because it would be more convenient and frugal than a commercial flight.

We found no evidence that any AMC officer involved in scheduling the flight raised cost as an issue or gave serious consideration to less costly options to transport General Ashy from Naples to Colorado, including previously scheduled AMC flights from Europe to the United States. Indeed, two AMC officers involved in the matter indicated that they considered this and similar flights to be wasteful and stated they did not complain in this case because it would have been futile. Additionally, an Air Force general officer candidly told us that the standard way for the AMC to transport a senior officer is to use a clean aircraft with suitable amenities and a highly proficient crew. He opined that if such service is not provided, the AMC would hear of the traveling official's dissatisfaction.

5. Conclusions

The flight of #70166 from Naples to Colorado was wasteful because the use of the aircraft and the substantial expense it entailed were unnecessary to meet the requirements General Ashy said formed the basis for his itinerary.

The Air Force dispatched an empty C-141B from the United States to Europe solely to transport General Ashy to Colorado. Moreover, as previously mentioned, #70166 was twice refueled in flight by the AMC tanker aircraft at additional expense. Commercial flights and previously scheduled military

⁷ The figures included six admirals (O-10) who transferred between April 1994 and August 1994, four Air Force generals (O-10) who transferred between July 1994 and October 1994, and five Army generals (O-10) who transferred between October 1993 and December 1994. There are no Marine Corps generals (O-10) stationed outside the United States. One Admiral and two Army Generals traveled on commercial aircraft. One Air Force general traveled part way on commercial aircraft and part way on military aircraft when being reassigned from Europe to Hawaii.

aircraft were available that met General Ashy's requirements. Had General Ashy used either of those alternatives, the cost of his travel would have been a small fraction of that actually incurred.

General Ashy, throughout the inquiry, maintained that he did not request the dispatch and use of that particular aircraft. He testified he was unaware that #70166, and not a previously scheduled AMC aircraft, was transporting him until he arrived at the airport. None of the individuals we interviewed during the inquiry provided evidence that disputed General Ashy's testimony.

Authorization for the flight of #70166 was recommended by AMC staff officers and the recommendation was approved by the AMC Commander in response to Colonel Starbuck's inquiry about available military transportation for General Ashy's travel. The AMC staff stated that they believed the requirement for General Ashy's travel was urgent, that no commercial flights were available, and that his departure had to be from Naples based on Colonel Starbuck's conversation. Those statements are disputed by Colonel Starbuck. In fact, we found that the travel requirement was not urgent. Other flights, commercial and military, were available which could reasonably have met General Ashy's needs, including the need he perceived for attack assessor training prior to his assumption of command.⁸

We also found that, despite the various cited regulatory directives on cost consciousness, AMC personnel did not independently assess whether the costs involved were in fact reasonable before authorizing the flight. Personnel at the AMC told us they believed they were following accepted military practice in providing that type of transportation to a senior military officer. Our independent review confirmed that this case was not unique. In that context, it is difficult to assign responsibility for wasted resources solely to AMC personnel when their actions, though clearly insensitive to the issue of costs, were apparently driven by a perceived duty to satisfy General Ashy's request and to follow past practice.

B. The flights between Colorado and Washington, DC

1. Facts about the flights

General and Mrs. Ashy flew from Colorado to Washington, DC aboard a C-21 aircraft on September 11 and returned on September 12. The purpose of the trips was for General and Mrs. Ashy to attend the ceremony in which he was promoted to general by the Air Force Chief of Staff. The Air Force

⁸ Although General Ashy and others stated that attack assessor training was necessary for him to perform his duties, there was no regulatory requirement that he receive the training before he assumed command.

provided cost estimates for the flights ranging from \$5,020 to \$7,516, which are set forth at Appendix 4. Trans World Airlines informed us that the price of a single round trip commercial ticket from Colorado Springs to Washington was \$512 at the time of General Ashy's flight.

General Ashy initially testified that he flew to Washington for the promotion ceremony at the behest of the Chief of Staff, General Merrill McPeak. He said he would have preferred to have held the ceremony in Colorado so his mother and other family members could attend. He also said that he had the option of being promoted in Colorado by the Vice Chief of Staff, who was scheduled to attend his change of command ceremony.

General McPeak stated that both he and General Ashy wanted him to perform the promotion and that it was appropriate for General Ashy to make a separate trip from Colorado for the ceremony. Additionally, General McPeak said that it would not have been appropriate for the Vice Chief of Staff to perform General Ashy's promotion because the Vice Chief does not promote officers to general. He added that it also would not have been appropriate for the Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff to officiate at the promotion ceremony since the promotion was a service matter. (The Vice Chief of Staff and the Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff attended General Ashy's change of command ceremony in Colorado the day after his promotion in Washington.)

An officer who served on General McPeak's staff testified that Colonel Starbuck told her that General Ashy had an urgent need to reach Colorado for training. The officer also testified she had telephone discussions with General Ashy during which General Ashy stated that it was very important to him that General McPeak perform the promotion. She stated that she asked General Ashy if he could stop in Washington while enroute to Colorado from Naples. She further stated that General Ashy was not receptive to stopping in Washington while enroute to Colorado because his wife and other members of his family would not be present. According to the staff officer, when General McPeak learned of that information, he inquired whether it would be possible for General Ashy to come to Washington from Colorado. The officer could not recall any discussion with General Ashy regarding the Vice Chief of Staff performing the promotion in Colorado.

On reinterview after we spoke with the staff officer, General Ashy repeated his earlier testimony and added that had he stopped in Washington while enroute to Colorado, his wife would not have been able to attend the ceremony. He explained that since his spouse had flown at Government expense as far west as Houston incident to her August return from Italy enroute to Colorado, the Government would not provide transportation for her to fly, alone, back to Washington. He stated that the absence of Government payment for her air fare was a consid-

eration, but not an overriding consideration, in arranging his promotion ceremony. We found that Mrs. Ashy's travel between Colorado and Washington, approved by the Vice Chief of Staff of the Air Force, was in accordance with DoD Regulation 4515.13-R and the Secretary of Defense memorandum of June 10, 1994 that permit spouses to accompany their sponsor on Government aircraft under certain circumstances.

2. Applicable regulations and policies

Secretary of Defense Memorandum, DoD Policy on the Use of Government Aircraft and Air Travel, dated June 10, 1994, provides guidance for the use of airlift resources for temporary duty travel by civilians, military members, family members and military retirees within the DoD. It designates officers in the grade of general/admiral (O-10) as "required use travelers" who must use Government aircraft when traveling on temporary duty.

3. Standard custom and practices

The Air Force provided information regarding the ten most recent promotions of Air Force officers to general which reflected that five of the ten were promoted in Washington. We found that of those five, two were officers then stationed in Washington and a third stopped in Washington enroute from Japan to Europe. The fourth officer and General Ashy traveled to Washington for their promotions. The Air Force information also reflected that the Commander, Air Combat Command, officiated at the promotion ceremonies for two of the five officers not promoted in Washington.

4. Discussion

General Ashy could have stopped in Washington enroute from Naples to Colorado. That would have allowed him to be promoted by the Chief of Staff, would have incurred minimal additional travel cost to the Government, but would have required him to pay for his spouse to travel from Texas to Washington if she were to attend the ceremony.⁹

Moreover, General Ashy could have requested to be promoted in Colorado. Although General McPeak stated he felt that was not appropriate, General Ashy told us that it was an option for him to have been promoted by the Vice Chief of Staff in Colorado where his family could attend the ceremony. He

⁹ In that event, Mrs. Ashy could properly have flown with General Ashy as he completed his military flight to Colorado in accordance with the authority previously cited for spousal travel. Paragraph 5.B. of the DoD Policy on the Use of Government Aircraft and Travel, promulgated by the Secretary of Defense memorandum of June 10, 1994, permits generals/admirals (O-10) to approve the travel of their spouses to accompany them on military aircraft.

testified that he believed he raised the topic with the staff officer during their discussions. In contrast, the staff officer stated they did not discuss the option of having the Vice Chief of Staff preside at a Colorado ceremony.

Instead, General Ashy elected the most costly approach, for him and Mrs. Ashy to fly together on a military aircraft from Colorado to Washington and return.

5. Conclusions

In order to be promoted by General McPeak and have Mrs. Ashy present without incurring a personal expense for her travel, General Ashy employed a circuitous route at taxpayer expense. Notwithstanding his disclaimer that the cost of a commercial ticket was "not an overriding consideration," he offered no other overriding consideration for rejecting suggestions that he stop in Washington enroute to Colorado.

The flights, while not expressly prohibited by regulation, indicate a disregard for cost that is inconsistent with the expressed intent of the Secretary of Defense June 10, 1994 memorandum, that is "to make more effective use of DoD airlift resources and minimize costs."

The flights from Colorado to Washington and return were a waste of funds for which General Ashy is responsible. There was simply no need for those trips. We found that General Ashy elected to have the Government fund those flights rather than bear the personal expense of a commercial ticket for his wife. In light of General Ashy's rank and position, he should be accountable for the abuse of resources incident to the travel between Colorado and Washington.

III. THE AIR FORCE RESPONSE TO MEDIA INQUIRIES

1. Facts

On October 21, 1994, Mr. Hackworth, having heard from the two retired officers who were denied space-available transportation on the Naples to Colorado flight, called the Public Affairs Office at the AMC to request information on the flight. Subsequently, the AMC notified the Headquarters, Air Force and the SPACECOM of Mr. Hackworth's inquiry and the Air Force Director of Public Affairs advised the Secretary of the Air Force and the Chief of Staff that there was media interest in General Ashy's trip.

On November 1, General Ashy, at the request of the AMC Commander, drafted a handwritten memorandum with his views on the flight. In the memorandum, General Ashy wrote that commercial arrangements for travel from Naples to Colorado were "doable," but he asked Colonel Starbuck to request assistance from the AMC.

He also wrote that only after he saw the C-141 aircraft in Naples did he know the AMC was sending the AMC Commander's aircraft to transport him and that it came with amenities for senior officials. Subsequently, he provided to his Public Affairs Officer a typed, expanded memorandum that contained the same factual information. The Public Affairs Officer forwarded the memorandum to the Air Force Director of Public Affairs. During the course of the investigation, we found no evidence to refute the statements of fact in either memorandum. Copies of General Ashy's memoranda are at Appendix 5.

On November 4, the AMC provided Mr. Hackworth a written response to 19 questions he had posed. Throughout November, the AMC and the SPACECOM prepared numerous notes and memoranda regarding media interest in the flight. During that time, ABC's "20/20" became interested in the story.

On November 15, an AMC public affairs officer provided a memorandum to the Vice Commander of the AMC advising him that Mr. Hackworth believed a cover-up was in progress because he was not being provided the documents he had requested.

On November 17, the SPACECOM Public Affairs Officer, Colonel David Garner, and Mr. Thrasher, a producer for "20/20," talked on the telephone for approximately 30 minutes. Colonel Garner could not remember the specifics of the topics discussed, but stated that the conversation was unpleasant and he needed to improve the situation so he and Mr. Thrasher could work together. According to a memorandum written by Mr. Thrasher at the time, a copy of which was provided to us by Mr. Hackworth, Colonel Garner made derogatory remarks about Mr. Hackworth, provided some factual information about the flight (some of which proved to be inaccurate), and refused to allow General Ashy to be interviewed.

On November 22, Mr. Hackworth and a crew from "20/20" visited McGuire AFB to conduct interviews and film #70166.

On November 23, an AMC spokesman who had participated in the McGuire visit advised the Command that the ABC crew was emphasizing the "rank has its privileges" aspect of the story while Mr. Hackworth's concern, the waste of Government resources, was more serious. The spokesman also noted that Mr. Hackworth was suspicious of a cover-up by the Air Force. The information was sent by facsimile to the Public Affairs Offices at the SPACECOM and Headquarters, Air Force. A copy of the facsimile is at Appendix 6, pages 6 and 7.

On November 27 and 28, a crew from "20/20" visited Naples to conduct interviews and film the facilities. After Colonel Starbuck reversed an earlier agreement to appear on camera and the "20/20" crew was prohibited from entering the NATO military facilities in Naples, Mr. Thrasher and the Air Force Director of Public Affairs, Colonel (now Brigadier

General) Ronald T. Sconyers, had a telephone conversation. Colonel Sconyers characterized the conversation as an extremely heated, unprofessional, one-sided screaming contest.

On November 30, Mr. Hackworth and Mr. Thrasher interviewed General Ashy's enlisted aide by telephone. The Public Affairs Officer at the SPACECOM and Mrs. Ashy were present with the aide. During the interview, Mr. Hackworth complained that the Public Affairs Officer at the SPACECOM had repeatedly lied to him. The Public Affairs Officer did not respond to Mr. Hackworth's assertions. Air Force public affairs officials told us they viewed the conduct of Mr. Thrasher and Mr. Hackworth during the interview as unprofessional. Subsequently, the Air Force Director of Public Affairs called ABC News to complain.

On December 1, the Air Force Judge Advocate General, acting on the request of the Air Force Deputy General Counsel, directed a colonel who served as Chief of Civil Litigation to gather the facts regarding the flight from Naples to Colorado. The colonel presented his interim findings to the Deputy General Counsel on or about December 4. He testified that he told her the Air Force had sent an aircraft around the world for no purpose.

On December 9, the Secretary of the Air Force wrote to Senator Grassley expressing her "personal outrage" at "the possible consequences of the tone" of the questions in his letter to us regarding the presence of the female enlisted aide on the flight. She wrote that it was important for women in the Air Force to be able to work in an environment free of unfounded innuendo or gossip and that such questions could undercut the ability of women to pursue successfully careers in the military. The Secretary also telephoned ABC on December 9 to relay the same message. That evening, ABC aired its story about the flight on the program "20/20." The Newsweek article appeared on the following Monday.

2. Professional standards applicable to public affairs officers

Department of Defense Directive 5122.5, Assistant to the Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs, December 2, 1993, sets forth the DoD Principles of Information and states "It is the policy of the Department of Defense to make available timely and accurate information so that the public, Congress and the news media may assess and understand the facts about national security and defense strategy." It also states "Information will be made fully and readily available, consistent with statutory requirements, unless its release is precluded by current and valid security classification."

Air Force Instruction 35-206, Media Relations, July 1994, provides guidance to Air Force public affairs officers

regarding their dealings with representatives of the media and the public. It states:

"When bad news occurs, release it quickly and candidly. Experience proves candor is best. If an installation tries to conceal bad news and the media find out about it, the bad news may be in the media for weeks or months instead of a day or two. Public suspicion will linger indefinitely straining future communication. The Air Force recognizes occasional bad news is inevitable and it cannot afford any attempt to conceal bad news."

Air Force Policy Directive 35-1, Public Affairs Management, September 27, 1993, assigns responsibility for oversight of the Air Force Public Affairs program to the Director of Public Affairs. It also assigns to that position the responsibility to advise the Secretary of the Air Force and the Chief of Staff on all matters relating to the Public Affairs program.

3. Discussion

The relationship between the media and the Air Force regarding the story

The reporters covering the story, as well as the Air Force officials involved in responding to their questions, commented during the investigation about the deteriorating relations between the media and the Air Force from October until mid-December.

Mr. Hackworth and Mr. Thrasher indicated to us they lost confidence in the veracity of Air Force public affairs officers after the officers made a series of incorrect statements and, in a number of cases, did not correct their errors before the reporters had identified the inaccuracies. Mr. Hackworth stated that he viewed the misstatements as far exceeding the expected "spin doctoring" by which some public affairs officers seek to present their organizations in the most favorable light.

Most of the public affairs officers involved in the story expressed concern with the media. They viewed the reporters as biased and unreceptive to the information they provided. Spokesmen at the AMC and the SPACECOM said they were frustrated because the reporters were not interested in hearing the complete story and they could only respond to a series of questions from the reporters. Moreover, the SPACECOM spokesman provided a statement from General Ashy to the Air Force Director of Public Affairs and recommended it be released to the media. The statement was not released.

We found that representatives of the Air Force provided the reporters with substantially incorrect information on a number of occasions. Several examples are illustrative.

First, an AMC spokesman early in the matter told Mr. Hackworth that there were additional passengers on the flight from Naples to Colorado. The spokesman told us he mistakenly reported the data from #70166's manifest for the flight from Russia, which preceded the flight from Naples to Colorado. Mr. Hackworth challenged the information after he found it to be incorrect and only subsequently did the AMC advise Mr. Hackworth that General Ashy and his enlisted aide were the sole passengers.

Second, in a memorandum dated November 4, a public affairs officer at the AMC advised Mr. Hackworth that passengers not on active duty were prohibited by Customs and Immigration rules from entering the United States at Peterson AFB. Mr. Hackworth said he checked that information and found it inaccurate. In fact, we found that DoD Directive 4500.54-G, Foreign Clearance Guide, dated June 5, 1994, authorizes the entry of non-military passengers at Peterson AFB with advance coordination for customs and immigration. The Air Force did not provide accurate information to Mr. Hackworth on that point prior to publication of the Newsweek article.

Third, an AMC spokesman told Mr. Hackworth that the flight was justified as a training mission. The spokesman told us he made the statement based on his understanding of the AMC training practices. The Air Force Chief of Staff acknowledged during our interview that the flight was not justified as a training mission.

Fourth, Colonel Starbuck told Mr. Thrasher that the aide wore her blue uniform, knowing that she actually wore her camouflage battle dress uniform. Colonel Starbuck indicated that he sought to avoid admitting the aide had changed her clothes in General Ashy's residence because he did not want to fuel an unfounded line of inquiry regarding General Ashy's relationship with the aide.

Mr. Hackworth said he found those and other inaccuracies uncharacteristic since military spokesmen are usually factually correct. He said the repeated inaccuracies led him to suspect that the Air Force was concealing the truth regarding General Ashy's flight.

The relationship between Mr. Hackworth and the
SPACECOM Public Affairs Officer

The Newsweek article was especially critical of the Public Affairs Officer at the SPACECOM, Colonel David Garner. Consequently, we examined in detail his communications with the reporters.

Colonel Garner said that as the story began to develop, he believed it would be serious. He said that General Ashy had merely asked for help from the AMC in obtaining transportation and that the AMC was responsible for generating the #70166 mission.

Mr. Hackworth stated that Colonel Garner told him there were no commercial flights available for General Ashy. Colonel Garner testified that he did not make that statement, but that he did advise Mr. Hackworth there were no U.S. carriers flying from Naples.¹⁰

Mr. Hackworth reported in the Newsweek article that Colonel Garner told him the enlisted aide flew with General Ashy to be with her mother who was "dying of cancer." Colonel Garner stated that he mistakenly told Mr. Thrasher that the aide's mother was dying of cancer. Colonel Garner said the misstatement was corrected by the aide during her November 30 interview with Mr. Hackworth.¹¹

Mr. Hackworth also wrote that Colonel Garner told him General Ashy should not be blamed for the Air Force doing something stupid. Colonel Garner denied making the statement, but testified that he commented to Mr. Hackworth that if there was fault, he did not think the evidence would show that General Ashy had done anything wrong.

The Newsweek article attributed to Colonel Garner statements that General Ashy had to travel expeditiously to Colorado to observe a Chinese missile launch and that his Deputy, a Canadian, could not be trusted to fill in for him. Colonel Garner stated that his comment about a Chinese missile launch was taken out of context from a hypothetical discussion of General Ashy's duties and denied saying the Deputy could not be trusted.

On that last matter, a SPACECOM public affairs officer overheard a portion of the conversation in which Colonel Garner described chain of command issues to

¹⁰ The Fly America Act and implementing regulations permit the use of non-U.S. carriers under certain circumstances. Since U.S. carriers were available to meet General Ashy's travel requirements, none of the exceptions applied.

¹¹ On November 28, Mr. Hackworth and Mr. Thrasher submitted a written request to the Air Force Public Affairs Office for information on the enlisted aide's status when traveling to Colorado and documents regarding her emergency leave. On November 29, the SPACECOM responded in writing that the aide had traveled pursuant to her reassignment and that she had not gone on emergency leave. During her conversation on November 30, the enlisted aide told Mr. Hackworth that her travel on #70166 was not related to her mother's illness.

Mr. Hackworth. The officer testified that he believed Colonel Garner had "given the slightest inference" there were problems with the bi-national chain of command.

On November 28, Mr. Hackworth and Mr. Thrasher asked the Air Force to provide information on whether General Ashy's enlisted aide had filed or was contemplating filing a sexual harassment complaint against the crew of #70166. Mr. Hackworth told us that Colonel Garner had originally raised the issue to him. Colonel Garner confirmed Mr. Hackworth's account and testified that General Ashy had asked him if anything might have occurred between the aide and the crew. Because of that, Colonel Garner said, he wove the possibility of improper action by the crew into his conversation with Mr. Hackworth hoping to elicit a response. However, contrary to Colonel Garner's testimony, General Ashy testified that he never voiced any speculation to Colonel Garner or others about possible incidents between his aide and the crew.

In our view, Colonel Garner should have taken reasonable steps to ensure that his communications with the media were accurate and completely understood. We believe he failed to do so.

Coordination between public affairs officers at the Headquarters of the SPACECOM and the AMC failed to resolve the problems

From the outset, there appeared to be a good flow of information between the Public Affairs Offices at Headquarters, SPACECOM and AMC. Details of media queries and responses were routinely distributed among the Commands by electronic mail and facsimile. Commanders at both Commands and the senior leadership at the Headquarters, Department of the Air Force, were apprised of developments.

However, while information flowed among public affairs officers, coordination did not necessarily occur. The SPACECOM spokesmen viewed the reporters' concerns as a matter for AMC to address. Conversely, AMC spokesmen viewed the central issue as the urgency behind General Ashy's travel, an issue that only the SPACECOM and General Ashy could address.

Air Force public affairs officers are responsible to their commands and their commanders. In this case, spokesmen at the AMC and the SPACECOM sought to shift the focus of media attention to the other command. One AMC spokesman said that while the Air Force "took a kick in the knee cap," the AMC came out as well as could be expected because its role was minimized in the stories.

Colonel Sconyers, the Director of Public Affairs for the Air Force, testified that in mid-November, he became concerned that the story was not being handled effectively.

However, he indicated that it was public affairs practice to keep stories with field commands since they could better respond to the media in most cases. In contrast, spokesmen at the AMC and the SPACECOM said they saw a need for the story to be handled at the headquarters. One spokesman told us he believed Colonel Sconyers was reluctant to do so to protect the Chief of Staff, who had approved the flight in his previous assignment as Commander of the AMC. Colonel Sconyers denied that the story was kept in the field to protect General Fogleman.

Colonel Sconyers said that in mid-November he began to deal directly with Mr. Hackworth, who had complained to him that the information he received from the AMC and the SPACECOM was always changing. Colonel Sconyers stated that he became "fully energized" because he saw that the communications between the reporters and the AMC and the SPACECOM were not constructive. However, Colonel Sconyers was unable to correct the problems that had arisen or resolve the concerns of Mr. Hackworth and Mr. Thrasher about the inaccurate information previously provided to them.

Involvement of the Air Force senior leaders

On October 25, General Ashy spoke to General Fogleman about media interest in his flight from Naples. Also on that date, Colonel Sconyers sent memoranda to the Secretary of the Air Force and the Chief of Staff, as well as the Deputy General Counsel, the Air Force Inspector General and others alerting them to the media interest regarding General Ashy's flight.¹² Colonel Sconyers stated he met daily with the Secretary to update her on public affairs issues and that he apprised her of developments in the Ashy matter as they occurred. The Secretary testified that she received periodic information but specifically stated that she was not informed of the reporters' complaints that they were being lied to by Air Force spokesmen.

General Fogleman testified that General Ashy advised him that Mr. Hackworth was inquiring into the circumstances of the flight from Naples to Colorado and that space available passengers had been denied seats. General Fogleman told us that on the same day he went to the Secretary of Defense to inform him of the situation.

¹² Those memoranda stated, "An article alleging fraud, waste and abuse involving Gen Ashy's Sept 9 flight from Naples, Italy to Colorado Springs may appear in the Nov 1 issue of Newsweek." Based on this information, Air Force senior leaders could have assigned responsibility for gathering the facts regarding the flight to the Air Force Inspector General. That would have been consistent with procedures established by Air Force Instruction 90-301, Inspector General Complaints, dated May 23, 1994, and DoD Directive 5505.6, Investigations of Allegations Against Senior Officials of the Department of Defense, dated July 12, 1991.

We found four memoranda from Colonel Sconyers to the Secretary of the Air Force and four memoranda from Colonel Sconyers to the Chief of Staff dated between October 25 and December 6, 1994 that contained updates on the story. The documents are at Appendix 6. The memoranda did not report the media complaints about inaccuracies. However, an attachment to a memorandum to the Chief of Staff, dated November 23, indicated that a reporter was suspicious of a cover-up. A memorandum to the Chief of Staff, dated December 4 and discussed below, described other problems that Colonel Sconyers had observed in the public affairs handling of the story.

Colonel Sconyers said he did not recall receiving specific instructions from either the Secretary or the Chief of Staff regarding the story. He stated that both officials were concerned with getting information out to the media accurately and completely, but they elected to leave to the Commander of the AMC the responsibility for handling press inquiries about the flight.

On December 1, the Air Force Deputy General Counsel requested that the Judge Advocate General appoint a judge advocate to gather facts regarding General Ashy's flight. The Deputy General Counsel testified the assignment of a judge advocate as fact finder was prompted by her concern that the Public Affairs Office was not aware of all relevant details and regulations concerning the flight. The Judge Advocate General testified that he could not recall any other occasion in which he was asked to provide a judge advocate to conduct a fact-finding process such as this. The judge advocate, a colonel, testified he was instructed not to take verbatim testimony and not to prepare a written report of his fact-finding.

In early December, General Ashy called the Vice Chief of Staff and proposed releasing to the press the written memorandum he had provided to Colonel Sconyers. The Vice Chief said he checked with the Chief of Staff, who informed him that no statement would be released. General Ashy testified that the Vice Chief told him words to the effect that "Joe, we're going to ride this through."

On or about December 4, the judge advocate briefed the Deputy General Counsel on his findings to date. The Deputy General Counsel testified that she could not recall the details of his briefing or if she advised the Secretary of them. The Secretary said she did not receive the results of the fact-finding. The Deputy General Counsel said that work by the judge advocate was stopped once the investigation by this office was initiated.

On December 4, Colonel Sconyers wrote to the Chief of Staff that he had spoken by telephone with General and Mrs. Ashy who were upset because they believed the story would

allude to sexual impropriety by General Ashy. He added that General Ashy felt his side of the story was not being presented since the AMC had not admitted "fault in the way the plane was scheduled." Colonel Sconyers commented,

"AMC, although they have provided the answers to most of the questions asked, has never really 'fessed up' to making any mistakes here (if in fact mistakes were made.). (If we would have done that early on, and confirmed that we had reviewed and fixed processes that may have given the impression of wasting money, I don't think we would be this far with this story.)"

Colonel Sconyers provided a proposed letter supporting General Ashy for the Chief of Staff to release prior to the airing of the "20/20" story. During our interview, Colonel Sconyers did not recall any discussions he may have had with General Fogleman regarding the proposed letter. In any event, the proposed letter was not released.¹³

On the day the "20/20" story was to be broadcast, December 9, the Secretary telephoned ABC. She told us she believed it was inappropriate for ABC News to raise questions directed solely at the fact that General Ashy's aide happened to be female because it would undercut women in the military. She testified she essentially read to the ABC personnel a letter she had written to Senator Grassley on the same topic. A copy of her letter to Senator Grassley is at Appendix 7.

The Secretary testified that she made the call because she had been informed that there might be a sexual innuendo in the "20/20" story, that there was a "teaser" for the program that she viewed as titillation, and she had talked to Mrs. Ashy, who told her the enlisted aide was upset. She stated she did not discuss any other aspects of the story because the facts and circumstances of the flight were under investigation by this office.

The actions of the Air Force senior leaders in notifying the Secretary of Defense about the reporters' inquiry, in calling Mrs. Ashy and ABC News, in requesting the Vice Chief of Staff to inform General Ashy that he would have to "ride this through," and in writing Senator Grassley indicate that they were well aware of the negative nature of the story and did not consider this matter as routine. There is, however, no evidence that they were ever informed about Air Force public affairs

¹³ Colonel Sconyers said he asked the Secretary of the Air Force to telephone Mrs. Ashy because she was upset. The Secretary made the call and testified that the subject of her conversation with Mrs. Ashy was the media's references to the enlisted aide.

officers providing inaccurate information to the media. Colonel Sconyers' memoranda do not address this matter and the Secretary of the Air Force testified that she was unaware of this aspect.

4. Conclusions

The Air Force was inept in its response to media inquiries about the flight. The presentation of a series of incorrect facts, careless communications and lack of central direction to resolve conflicting objectives among field personnel defined the Air Force performance in that aspect of the matter. The Air Force did not comply with its policy objectives regarding the quick and candid release of unfavorable information.

The SPACECOM spokesman was careless in his communications with the media.

The Air Force Director of Public Affairs did not exercise effective oversight to ensure a timely, accurate response to the media on a matter of concern to the senior leaders of the Air Force.

IV. OTHER MATTERS

A. Construction Projects at Peterson AFB

The Newsweek article also cited two projects at Peterson AFB as examples of waste by General Ashy. We examined the circumstances of those projects, two cuts through a road median and the relocation of General Ashy's office inside the headquarters, as well as a third project initiated by General Ashy for the renovation of a conference room in the headquarters.

First, based on testimony from General Ashy and subordinates, we found that the circumstances regarding the cut-throughs were essentially as related in Newsweek. Shortly after he arrived at Peterson AFB, General Ashy questioned his Executive Officer about why there were no cut-throughs to ease entry and exit from a small parking lot in front of the headquarters building. The parking lot consists of six spaces for general officers assigned to the headquarters and three spaces for visitors. The Executive Officer discussed General Ashy's comments with the Wing Commander and the work was completed within 14 days at a cost of \$8967. We saw no reasonable need for the work given the expense involved and the limited use of the parking lot.

Second, while Newsweek reported that General Ashy moved to a new office because he wanted a better view, General Ashy and his Executive Officer stated the move was made to obtain a more functional office suite. The move was accomplished by office personnel, although \$8,655 was spent for contractors to move

modular furniture, communications systems and computers. We found no basis to conclude the move was inappropriate.

However, we found that concurrent with the office move, the SPACECOM initiated a design project at a cost of \$23,000 to renovate the new command suite. General Ashy testified that the only improvement he desired was the addition of a common-use bathroom and that he was not aware of the design project. General Ashy's Executive Officer confirmed that he caused the base engineers to initiate the design project and that he did not inform General Ashy that the scope of the design project extended beyond the addition of a common-use bathroom. The design project was cancelled in December 1994 and the contractor was paid \$10,442 for work to that date. Since General Ashy told us that there was no requirement for the project, we concluded it was unnecessary and thus wasteful.

Finally, we found that the \$96,800 figure cited in Newsweek for office renovation was actually the cost for a portion of a \$200,000 renovation of a conference room in the headquarters building. Before General Ashy arrived in Colorado, the SPACECOM had ordered audiovisual equipment at a cost of \$59,168 for the conference room. During his first briefing in the room, General Ashy interrupted the briefing shortly after it began. He provided detailed information to his staff on his preferences for upgrading the room, including converting the audiovisual system from rear projection to front projection, as well as specific directions for refurbishing the room.

Subsequently, the SPACECOM ordered equipment at an additional cost of \$50,834 to allow for the use of the previously purchased equipment in the manner that General Ashy had directed and to provide the additional audiovisual enhancements he wanted. The SPACECOM also planned to spend \$96,800 for new carpet, drapes, lecterns and other improvements to the conference room to meet General Ashy's requirements.

General Ashy testified that the conference room was not adequate and that he provided suggestions for its improvement to his staff. General Ashy also testified that he first learned of the cost of the project after the publication of the Newsweek article. He said he then placed the \$96,800 renovation project in abeyance so he could review lower cost alternatives. A final decision on the scope of the project has not yet been made.

B. Shipment of Senior Officers' Household Goods by Air

In reviewing the Air Force responses to the media regarding the shipment of General Ashy's household goods, we noted the household goods were shipped by air, "space required" to and from his assignment in Naples. Applicable regulations

permit shipment of household goods by air on "space required" and "space available" priorities.¹⁴ The fact that General Ashy's was moved twice on the higher priority prompted us to obtain information from the Military Departments regarding the shipment of senior officers' household goods incident to overseas assignments.

We found that the Army does not transport general officers' household goods on a space required basis and only infrequently uses space available priority. The Navy frequently transports the household goods of its admirals (O-10) and vice-admirals (O-9) overseas on a space required basis and uses space available infrequently for other flag officers.

With respect to the Air Force, we found that General Ashy's household goods were one of two space required air shipments of general officers' personal property in 1994. However, the property of other Air Force generals is routinely shipped by air with a space available priority.

Moreover, until recently, the Air Force had assigned an employee in its Headquarters to monitor the progress of general officer personal property shipments from origin to destination. The individual, a GS-14, told us he spent approximately 20 percent of his time coordinating with transportation offices worldwide to obtain current information on the status of each shipment and intervening as necessary with field activities and commercial shippers to preclude delays. For Air Force generals, "space available" has been essentially synonymous with "space required."

In late 1994, the Air Force transferred responsibility for monitoring shipments of general officers' personal property from the GS-14 to a new GS-9 position in the Transportation Office at Bolling Air Force Base.

We believe that further examination of that issue is warranted and will initiate a review of the shipment of household goods aboard Government aircraft.

¹⁴ For space available air shipment, the Military Service reimburses the AMC at the surface transportation rate. For space required shipment, the Military Service reimburses the AMC at the higher air transportation rate. The rates are determined by several factors, including the origin and destination points of the shipment. Space required shipments, in theory, arrive at their destination more quickly than space available shipments.

V. CONCLUSIONS

A. The dispatch of an empty C-141B from New Jersey to Naples and its nonstop flight from Naples to Colorado were unnecessary because commercial flights and other military flights were available that met General Ashy's stated needs.

B. The authorization of the flight was not in keeping with the policy of minimizing costs and ensuring effective use of Government aircraft that underlies Government travel regulations. On the other hand, that type of flight conformed to accepted military practices in past cases. In that context and in their desire to accommodate a senior military officer, AMC officials dispatched the flight but failed in their responsibility to ensure the effective use of Government resources.

C. The Air Force use of aircraft to support General Ashy reflects a culture that apparently lacks adequate cost consciousness in providing services to senior officials.

D. General Ashy's round trip flight from Colorado to Washington was wasteful because he could have accomplished the official purpose of the trip, his promotion, at less expense to the Government by stopping in Washington enroute from Naples to Colorado. We believe that he undertook circuitous travel so that his spouse could accompany him to Washington at Government expense.

E. Air Force public affairs officers provided factually incorrect information to the media. In pursuing their commands' interests, Public Affairs Officers at the AMC and the SPACECOM worked at cross purposes. The Air Force Director of Public Affairs did not exercise effective oversight to ensure that the Air Force provided timely, accurate information to the media on a matter of concern to the senior leaders of the Air Force.

F. Practices regarding the use of Government aircraft for the shipment of general officers' household goods merit further review.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

We recommend that:

A. The Secretary of Defense and the Secretaries of the Military Departments increase efforts to require that military necessity and the reasonableness of incurred cost, as opposed to rank, be the primary considerations in determining whether and in what manner travel and other services are provided to senior officials.

B. In that vein, the Secretary of Defense review the new policies that require generals and admirals (O-10) to use Government aircraft for all official travel, temporary duty and reassignment. In our view, the reasons for the required use, such as the urgency of travel, the personal safety of the traveller, or the need for secure communications, do not necessarily apply during reassignment travel and may not always apply on temporary duty travel when the experience of immediate subordinates, the situation within an officer's area of responsibility and other factors are considered. Thus, requiring generals and admirals (O-10) to use military aircraft when performing all travel, when less costly commercial flights might meet their needs, appears to conflict with the cost control policies set forth in OMB documents.

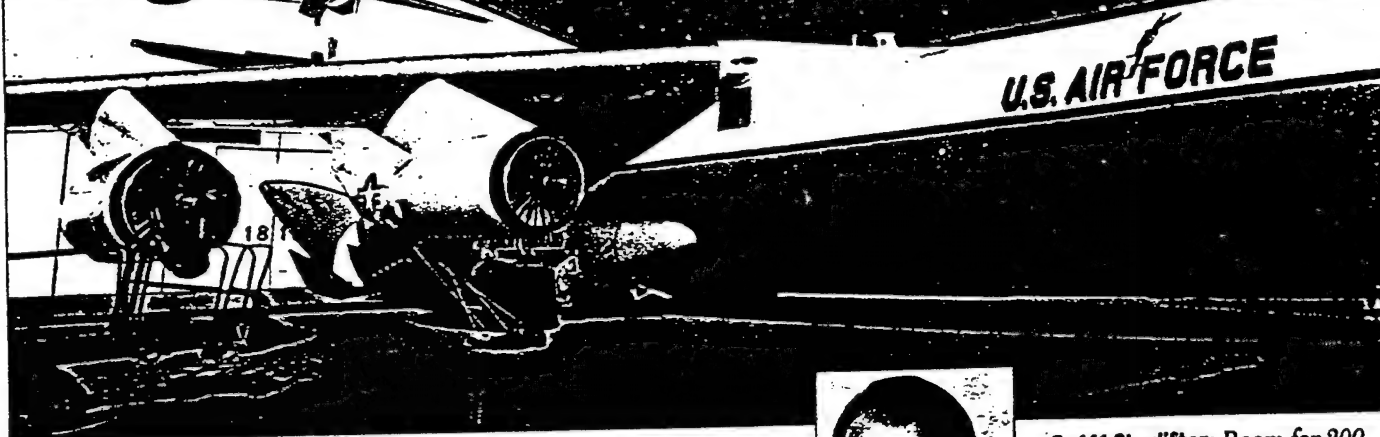
C. The Secretary of the Air Force initiate collection action to obtain reimbursement to the Defense Business Operations Fund-Transportation from General Ashy at the DoD User Rate for his flights between Colorado and Washington on September 11 and 12.

D. The Secretary of the Air Force review the effectiveness of practices substantially delegating public affairs responsibilities to subordinate organizations. Such a review is especially important in cases where media inquiries concern the personal conduct of the head of the subordinate organization or focus on activities within the subordinate organization that may ultimately reflect on the Air Force as an institution.

Appendices

- 1 Article in December 19, 1994 issue of Newsweek
- 2 Senator Grassley Letter of December 5, 1994
- 3 Responses to Questions Raised by Senator Grassley
- 4 Flight Cost Information
- 5 General Ashy's Memoranda on the Flight
- 6 Air Force Director of Public Affairs Memoranda
- 7 Secretary of Air Force Letter to Senator Grassley of December 9, 1994

Big Bird, Bad Move



Scandals: Was it worth \$200,000 to fly one air force general home?

By Col. David H. Hackworth

WHEN THE CAVERNOUS C-141B Starlifter roared down the runway at Naples, Italy, last September, there were only three passengers on board: air force Gen. Joseph W. Ashy, a young female enlisted aide and Nellie, Ashy's beloved cat. The transport plane normally carries up to 200 passengers with a crew of five. But for this flight eight extra crew members were laid on to help fly, navigate, maintain, cook and look after the four-star general's every need. Ashy, who had commanded NATO's air operations over Bosnia, was apparently in a hurry to assume his new post as chief of the U.S. Space Command: he flew nonstop 7,700 miles to Colorado Springs, requiring two midair refuelings by KC-135 tankers. Several other military personnel had requested seats on the flight on a "space available" basis, but they were turned away. Meanwhile, Ashy and his aide rested and dined in a removable \$70,000 VIP suite fitted inside the plane—complete with a kitchen, a VCR, two lounges and a bedroom.

The VIP "comfort pallet" wasn't the only thing egregious about Ashy's flight. At a time when USAF personnel and equipment are stretched thin around the globe, the C-141B had been flown, empty, from McGuire AFB, N.J., to Rhein-Main in Germany, where it was refueled and flown, again empty, to Naples (map). The next day, after a formal change-of-command ceremony, Ashy and his aide flew to Colorado, where the crew lay over for the night. Then

the C-141B flew to Andrews AFB, Md., to drop off the chef before returning to McGuire. In all, the mission tied up an \$8.5 million aircraft and crew of 13 for four days. Total cost to the taxpayer: between \$120,000 and \$200,000—including \$4,000 just to return the chef. Ashy could have bought a ticket on a commercial jet for \$1,464.24.

Besides being a blatant waste of money, this incident is about deception and the art of diffusing responsibility. I learned of it from disgruntled soldiers who were denied seats on the flight. I started digging and was initially told that 20 other passengers had been on board—but that was just the first lie. Reporters for ABC's "20/20" and I interviewed dozens of officials at NATO, the space command and the air force's Air Mobility Command (AMC). We got conflicting answers to almost every question we asked, even though the air force insists it has nothing to hide. Perhaps it's an institutional response to bad publicity, or perhaps, as one colonel whispered, "Ashy's pulling every string he can to kill this story."

Military personnel are supposed to use commercial transportation unless there are



Ashy was 'shocked' to see the VIP plane. Still, he could have raised hell.

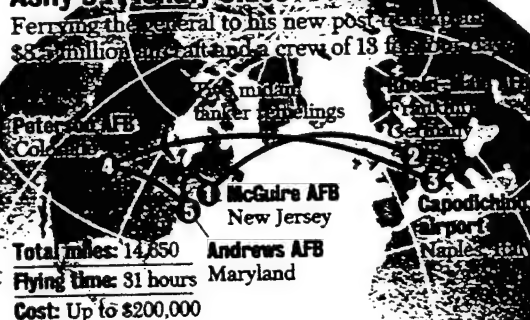
C-141 Starlifter: Room for 200 passengers—and a cat

special circumstances. Ashy refused to be interviewed, but his spokesman at the space command, Col. Dave Garner, said there were no commercial flights from Naples and that Ashy was needed at his new post fast. Yet had the change-of-command ceremony been held one hour earlier, Ashy could have easily flown to Rome and caught the daily TWA or Delta flight to New York—both had empty seats—then taken a connecting flight. Col. Randy Starbuck, Ashy's executive officer in Italy, knew on Aug. 25 what his travel needs were—he had 16 days to arrange the farewell hoopla and still find Ashy a commercial flight.

Starbuck said he requested "whatever aircraft was in the stream" and was surprised when he recognized the plane assigned to Gen. Ronald Fogleman, now air force chief of staff. Fogleman's spokesman told me his boss approved the flight. Garner insists that Ashy, too, was "shocked" to discover he was flying on a C-141B with VIP accommodations. If so, he should have raised hell and nailed those responsible.

Other aspects of the story didn't check out, either. One AMC officer told me the C-141B was dispatched because the crew needed training. But another officer said that if anything, this crew was overtrained and exhausted. What's more, there was no great rush for Ashy to take over the space command; his predecessor's tenure had been extended until the end of the month. Garner said Ashy was needed to observe the launch of a Chinese missile—but when I asked why his deputy couldn't fill in, Garner said lamely, "The deputy is a Canadian and couldn't be trusted." Then there's the matter

Ashy's Friendly Skies





AP (INSET): DAVID N. BERKOWITZ - NEWSWEEK

of Ashy's aide, Senior Airman Christa Hart. She was listed on the manifest as his "dependent," so airport personnel assumed she was his wife, who had actually left a month earlier. Garner said Hart was on board because her mother was "dying of cancer." But Hart told me that while her mother did have surgery, she was back at work and feeling fine.

Garner, who has since been hospitalized for stress, also insisted that it's not the general's fault "that the air force did something stupid." That seems to go with power: FDR once sent a destroyer to pick up his dog Fala; earlier this year several White House aides used Marine Corps choppers for a golfing trip. But that doesn't mean it's acceptable, especially when defense dollars are in short supply. In fact, while Ashy was misusing military resources, more than 200 navy aircraft, most of the Marine Corps' Second Air Wing and three entire army divisions were designated "not combat ready" because they didn't have the money for fuel, parts or maintenance.

Sen. Chuck Grassley, a longtime critic of military waste, thinks Ashy should resign and reimburse the Treasury. The Pentagon's inspector general is also investigating. Ashy, a former fighter pilot, has a reputation for excess: he is relocating his new office in Colorado to get a better view (cost: \$96,800) and ordered a road cut through the median in a base street because he didn't like making an extra turn (cost: \$7,400). Yet such waste and abuse is common in the military: the air force has nearly 200 aircraft tasked almost exclusively to ferry VIPs, costing tens of millions of dollars a year. AMC now says it has tightened the rules concerning such missions. But the brass must go further and employ the World War II gas-saving slogan for each flight: is this trip necessary?

Oh, yes, Nellie, the cat. She had a proper boarding pass and Ashy personally paid her \$85 fare. That may have been the only thing square about the whole trip. ■

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- ☐ 206 FEDERAL BUILDING
101 1ST STREET SE
CEDAR RAPIDS, IA 52401-1227
(319) 363-6832

United States Senate

CHARLES E. GRASSLEY

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-1501

December 5, 1994

- ☐ 103 FEDERAL COURTHOUSE BUILDING
320 8TH STREET
SIOUX CITY, IA 51101-1244
(712) 233-1860
- ☐ 210 WATERLOO BUILDING
531 COMMERCIAL STREET
WATERLOO, IA 50701-5497
(319) 232-6657
- ☐ 118 FEDERAL BUILDING
131 E. 4TH STREET
DAVENPORT, IA 52801-1513
(319) 322-4331
- ☐ 307 FEDERAL BUILDING
8 SOUTH 8TH STREET
COUNCIL BLUFFS, IA 51501
(712) 322-7103

Mr. Derek J. Vander Schaff
Deputy Inspector General
Department of Defense
400 Army Navy Drive
Arlington, VA. 22202-2884

Dear Mr. Vander Schaaf:

I am writing to request an investigation into the possible misuse of military aircraft by a senior Air Force officer, General Joseph W. Ashy.

The travel in question occurred on September 9, 1994 and involved a flight of a C-141 aircraft from McGuire Air Force Base, New Jersey to Naples, Italy, and then to Peterson Air Force Base, Colorado Springs, Colorado. KC-135 tanker aircraft conducted two in-flight refueling operations in support of Ashy's flight.

I would like you to investigate all the circumstances surrounding this flight to determine whether General Ashy's travel was proper and reasonable. Your inquiry should address but not be limited to the following questions:

--Who authorized the flight?

--Was there legitimate urgency behind General Ashy's travel plans, or would it have been reasonable and proper for him to travel on commercial aircraft?

--What was the total cost of the flight, including the cost of refueling operations?

--What was the estimated cost of an airline ticket from Naples, Italy to Colorado Springs in September 1994?

--Why did a young female enlisted aide - Senior Airman Christa Hart - accompany General Ashy on this flight? Why is Hart's name not listed on the flight manifest? The words "dependent wife" do appear on the manifest. Was Mrs. Ashy on the flight? Was Hart performing normal official duties, or was there some other reason for her presence? Exactly why was Hart on the flight?

--Were any military personnel and dependents, who were authorized to travel space-available on military aircraft, denied passage on the Ashy flight from Naples to Colorado Springs? If so, why?

Committee Assignments:

FINANCE
AGRICULTURE, NUTRITION, AND FORESTRY

JUDICIARY
OFFICE OF TECHNOLOGY ASSESSMENT

BUDGET
SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON AGING

Appendix 2
Page 1 of 2

--Were the KC-135 tanker crews that refueled General Ashy's airplane in need of additional training, or were their training requirements up-to-date and complete? Was in-flight refueling necessary to complete the mission?

--Was General Ashy's travel fully consistent with all regulations and federal statutory law?

--Was Ashy's travel consistent with policies established by the Clinton administration - especially OMB Bulletin No. 93-11 of April 1993, and Secretary of Defense Perry's memorandum of June 10, 1994?

--Do regulations and/or laws governing travel on military aircraft need to be revised to preclude this kind of abuse?

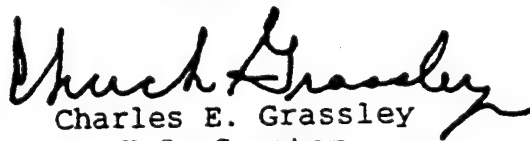
Mr. David Hackworth with Newsweek Magazine did most of the basic "pick and shovel" work on the Ashy flight. He has communicated with my office on this matter. He has assembled an impressive and telling pile of documents to prove his points. He is very disturbed by what he sees. He is disturbed by the arrogance that General Ashy's behavior appears to represent. However, he is most disturbed by the way Air Force officials responded to his questions.

Mr. Hackworth claims that Air Force officials have "repeatedly lied" to him and ABC producer Don Thrasher in response to their questions on the General Ashy flight. I would like you to contact both Hackworth and Thrasher to obtain the names of the Air Force officials involved and to determine whether they were dishonest in the way they responded to Hackworth's and Thrasher's questions. They have some particularly disturbing allegations about a public affairs officer at the Space Command, Colonel David Garner. Those allegations need to be examined. Mr. Hackworth can be reached at 212-445-5018. Mr. Thrasher's number is 202-222-6381.

I ask that you examine all the pertinent facts bearing on the Ashy flight, make recommendations for corrective action, and fix responsibility as called for by the facts, including the need for disciplinary action. A response is requested by February 3, 1995.

Your cooperation in these matters is always appreciated.

Sincerely,


Charles E. Grassley
U.S. Senator

Copies to:
The Honorable Strom Thurmond
and the Honorable Sam Nunn

APPENDIX 3

RESPONSES TO SENATOR GRASSLEY'S QUESTIONS TO THE DEPUTY INSPECTOR GENERAL, DOD

1. Who authorized the flight?

General Ashy requested that the Air Mobility Command (AMC) assist him with his travel. He did not request a specific aircraft or an aircraft exclusively for his use.

General Ashy's request was processed by the Tanker Airlift Control Center (TACC) of the AMC. The TACC reviewed the assets it had available and considered the level of service normally provided to senior officers such as General Ashy. Based on that assessment and their understanding of General Ashy's requirements, they determined that using #70166 was the best solution.

The TACC recommended to the Commander of the AMC, General Ronald Fogleman, that he approve the use of #70166 for the General Ashy. General Fogleman approved the flight.

2. Was there legitimate urgency behind General Ashy's travel plans, or would it have been reasonable and proper to him to travel on commercial aircraft?

There was no legitimate urgency behind General Ashy's travel plans. General Ashy's travel plans were driven by perceived needs for him to receive attack assessor training and attend a Pentagon promotion ceremony before he assumed command of the U.S. Space Command on September 13. We determined that the training was not required prior to his assumption of command and that there were alternatives to conducting the promotion ceremony in the Pentagon.

Additionally, General Ashy's Executive Officer had checked on the schedule and availability of commercial aircraft from Rome to Colorado. General Ashy determined that commercial arrangements were "doable."

While travel aboard military aircraft for permanent change of station travel is authorized by regulation, travel by commercial aircraft is also authorized. In this case, travel by commercial aircraft would have obviously been more cost effective.

3. What was the total cost of the flight, including the cost of refueling operations?

The cost for the use of Air Force aircraft depends on the rate at which the use is billed. In this case, the flight was flown as a training mission and was charged to the AMC training funds. The cost of the flight, billed at the Defense Business Operations Fund-Transportation (DBOF-T) training rate was \$97,920 (28.8 hours at \$3,400 per hour). In addition, the two tankers used for the in-flight refueling cost \$15,618 (6 hours at \$2,603 per hour, the Air Force Cost Analysis Improvement Group (AFCAIG) rate). Other rates are set forth at Appendix 4 to the report.

4. What was the estimated cost of an airline ticket from Naples Italy to Colorado Springs in September 1994?

Trans World Airlines advised us that the cost for a one way coach ticket at the Government rate was \$639. United Airlines indicated that a one way coach seat cost \$670 at the Government rate.

5. Why did a young female enlisted aide - Senior Airman Christa Hart - accompany General Ashy on this flight?

Senior Airman Hart served as General Ashy's Enlisted Aide in Naples and was being reassigned to Colorado with General Ashy. She was traveling on reassignment orders when she accompanied General Ashy on the flight.

We determined that there was nothing improper regarding Senior Airman Hart's reassignment from Naples to Colorado or her travel on the flight.

6. Why is Hart's name not listed on the manifest?

The manifest, prepared by personnel in the passenger terminal in Naples, incorrectly listed the passengers as General Ashy and one dependent. We found no evidence that might indicate the error was part of a subterfuge to conceal the identity of the second passenger. We concluded that the error was a mere mistake and did not pursue it further.

7. The words "dependent wife" do appear on the manifest. Was Mrs. Ashy on the flight?

The phrase "dependent wife" does not appear on the manifest. The manifest listed the second passenger only as a dependent. Mrs. Ashy was not on the flight. She had flown to the U.S. by commercial air on August 22.

8. Was Hart performing normal official duties, or was there some other reason for her presence? Exactly why was Hart on the flight?

Senior Airman Hart was performing official duties as General Ashy's Enlisted Aide. She was on the flight performing travel pursuant to reassignment. We determined there was nothing improper with her being on the flight.

9. Were any military personnel and dependents, who were authorized to travel space-available on military aircraft, denied passage on the Ashy flight from Naples to Colorado Springs? If so, why?

Two retired officers (one Air Force colonel and one Navy captain) and their wives who sought to travel "space available" from Naples to the United States were not permitted on the flight.

The aircrew believed that the AMC policy did not permit space available passengers to fly on #70166 when transporting senior officials unless the senior official requested they be allowed to board. We found no evidence that General Ashy was involved in the decision not to allow space available passengers on the flight, or that he was aware that other personnel were denied space available transportation on the flight.

The AMC policy has been clarified and disseminated. The AMC flights carrying senior officials will carry space available passengers unless the senior traveler specifically requests otherwise.

10. Was in-flight refueling necessary to complete the mission?

No.

11. Was General Ashy's travel fully consistent with all regulations and federal statutory law?

General Ashy's travel did not violate specific statutes or regulations pertaining to travel. Still, it was a waste of funds and should not have occurred.

12. Was Ashy's travel consistent with policies established by the Clinton administration - especially OMB Bulletin No. 93-11 of April 1993, and Secretary of Defense Perry's memorandum of June 10, 1994?

The issuance of Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular A-126 (Revised), dated May 22, 1992, was intended to "minimize cost and improve the management and use of Government aircraft." The Circular directed the Secretary

of Defense and the Uniformed Services to incorporate its applicable policies in DoD travel regulations.

On February 10, 1993, the President issued a memorandum limiting the circumstances under which senior executive branch officials (specifically excluding members of the military) are authorized to use Government aircraft. The memorandum, however, opened with a general statement of policy regarding travel by Government officials:

"The taxpayers should pay no more than absolutely necessary to transport Government officials. The public should only be asked to fund necessities, not luxuries, for its public servants."

To implement the guidance in the President's memorandum, the OMB issued Bulletin 93-11, Fiscal Responsibility and Reducing Perquisites, on April 19, 1993. DoD implementing instructions for the OMB Circular A-126, the President's memorandum, and OMB Bulletin 93-11 were issued by the Secretary of Defense in a memorandum, DoD Policy on the Use of Government Aircraft and Air Travel, dated June 10, 1994. The instructions were designed "to make more effective use of DoD airlift resources and minimize costs."

Because officials within the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) viewed OMB Circular 93-11 and OMB Bulletin A-126 as pertaining only to business-type travel by civilian officials, equivalent to temporary duty travel (TDY) for military officers, they limited the June 10 memorandum to TDY travel for civilian and military personnel of the DoD. The memorandum required that generals and admirals (O-10) use military aircraft when on temporary duty travel. It also stated that official travel by other senior officials shall normally be accomplished using commercial transportation unless commercial air is not reasonably available, highly unusual circumstances present a clear and present danger, an emergency exists, use of Government aircraft is more cost effective, or other compelling operational considerations make commercial transportation unacceptable.

The flights, while not expressly prohibited by regulation, indicate a disregard for cost that is inconsistent with the expressed intent of the Secretary of Defense June 10, 1994 memorandum, that is "to make more effective use of DoD airlift resources and minimize costs."

13. Do regulations and/or laws governing travel on military aircraft need to be revised to preclude this kind of abuse?

On May 9, 1995, the Deputy Secretary of Defense issued a memorandum that established policy for travel incident to reassignment, as well as travel incident to temporary duty. In part, the memorandum requires generals and admirals (O-10) to use military aircraft for official travel in both categories.

In our report, we recommend the Secretary of Defense review the provision regarding required use of military air by generals and admirals (O-10). In our view, the reasons for the required use, such as the urgency of travel, the personal safety of the traveller, or the need for secure communications, do not necessarily apply during reassignment travel and may not always apply on temporary duty travel when the experience of immediate subordinates, the situation within an officer's area of responsibility and other factors are considered. Thus, requiring generals and admirals (O-10) to use military aircraft when performing all travel, when less costly commercial flights might meet their needs, appears to conflict with the cost control policies set forth in OMB documents.

APPENDIX 4
TRANSPORTATION COSTS

ITALY TO COLORADO

AIRCRAFT (HOURS)	TRAINING RATE	DOD RATE	NON DOD GOVT RATE	NON GOVT RATE
#70166	\$3,400/HR	\$3,790/HR	\$7,355/HR	\$7,895/HR
(28.8)	\$97,920	\$109,152	\$211,824	\$227,376
TANKERS	\$2,603/HR	\$3,243/HR	\$6,015/HR	\$6,259/HR
(6.0)	\$15,618	\$19,458	\$36,090	\$37,554
PER DIEM	\$2,694	\$2,694	\$2,694	\$2,694
TOTAL	\$116,232	\$131,304	\$250,608	\$267,624

COLORADO TO WASHINGTON AND RETURN

AIRCRAFT (HOURS)	TRAINING RATE	DOD RATE	NON DOD GOVT RATE	NON GOVT RATE
C-21	\$728/HR	\$728/HR	\$1,069/HR	\$1,112/HR
(6.5)	\$4,732	\$4,732	\$6,948	\$7,228
PER DIEM	\$288	\$288	\$288	\$288
TOTAL	\$5,020	\$5,020	\$7,236	\$7,516

Memorandum :

1 NOV 94

After my confirmation in July, I needed PCS transportation to return to the CONUS and C-springs, Co. The problem was that LTG Ryan, my replacement ~~as~~ 16 AF Commander (NATF) and COMAIRSOB (NATO) was not yet confirmed. However, he finally received confirmation O/A 1 Sep 94. He arrived in Italy on 6 Sep 94. The Change of command for 16 AF, Aviano. It, officiated by Gen Jamerson, CINCUS, was the morning of 8 Sep (Thursday). The change of command in Naples, officiated by Adm Smith, ^{CINCUSOBS} was 9 Sep (Friday).

The Change of command in Colorado Springs for NORAD/USSPACECOM/AFIPACECOM was morning of 13 Sep (Tues). This ceremony was officiated by the Canadian Chief of Defense (Gen De Chastelain), Adm Owens representing Gen Shale, and Gen Macemon representing Gen McPeak. Therefore, between Friday noon, 9 Sep, and morning of 13 Sep (Tuesday), I had to travel to CONUS, receive training in warning procedure for NORAD, and be pinned at a pining ceremony.

The original plan was to return me to CONUS in CINCUSOBS' C-20 (his suggestion/offer). However, Gen Lorber and I subsequently discovered that this was not authorized, i.e. we could not PCS on an OSA aircraft. We then looked at returning ^{via} commercial air. I

(2)

could not depart Naples Airport because there were no US carriers (to go for, one must go on a US carrier). Therefore, departure from Rome was the only alternative with arrival in C-springs very early Sunday morning. This was doable, but I asked my exec, Col Randy Starbuck, to check in with AMC TACC and see if I could possibly catch a channel flight out of either Sigonella NAS or Frankfurt (Main Main AB). That would have been a perfectly satisfactory option for me and we assumed that flights would be passing through either of these two hubs each day. Randy made this request verbally to AMC Do. A few days later, the TACC/CD, Col Wesler, verbally advised Col Starbuck that a C-141 would be provided departing Naples on 9 Sep with arrival in C-springs late 9 Sep.

After the change of command, I proceeded to the airport and boarded. I had no previous knowledge about the so called "combat package" nor the origin of the aircraft. Since it was an AMC aircraft, I did not inquire about cargo or passengers. However, ^{all} ~~an~~ ^{all} ~~an~~ aircraft ~~on~~ on which I have flown, I have always made seats available to duty and/or ^{spouse} ~~spouse~~ passengers (C-21's). My record speaks for itself in this regard.

John

1 DEC 94

Joseph W. Ashy, General, USAF
Commander in Chief
250 S Peterson Blvd Ste 116
Peterson AFB CO 80914-3010

Dear

You continue to ask a number of questions regarding my permanent change of station travel from Naples, Italy to Colorado Springs, CO when I became commander of NORAD, US Space Command, and USAF Space Command. As a uniformed public servant who has been in the service of the USA for 32 years, I clearly understand my responsibilities to be totally accountable. Here are the facts as I can best recall them.

I was confirmed for promotion and transfer to Peterson AFB, CO on 12 July 1994. My replacement, Lt Gen Mike Ryan, could not move to Naples and become Commander, AIRSOUTH (NATO) and Commander, 16th Air Force (USAFE) until his respective Senate confirmation. Thus, I could not depart due to my responsibilities in Allied Forces (NATO), South—principally because of the air operations we were conducting in the Adriatic and over Bosnia. When General Ryan's confirmation finally occurred on 26 Aug, he traveled to Naples arriving on 6 Sep 94. That permitted us one day (7 Sep) to discuss the two commands and their responsibilities. The change of command for 16th Air Force

was officiated by CINCUSAFE, General Jamerson, the next day at Aviano.

Then, on 9 Sep, Admiral Smith officiated the AIRSOUTH change of command at Naples. The change of command at Peterson AFB had been scheduled for Tuesday morning, 13 Sep. It should be noted here that General Horner had been confirmed by the Senate for retirement on or before 30 Jun. So the foregoing events prompted the President to extend him past his active duty statutory service date. Therefore, the travel "window" was between early afternoon in Naples, 9 Sep 94 and the morning of 13 Sep at Peterson AFB, CO. In that period, I also had to receive required warning and attack assessment training at Cheyenne Mountain Complex so that I could fulfill my responsibilities to the national command authorities of Canada and the US as commander, NORAD.

Regarding travel options, my USAFE command had originally suggested that I return on a USAFE C-20. The vice commander, General Lorber, called me and advised that since a C-20 is in the operational support aircraft (OSA) category, it was not permissible to utilize it in a permanent change of station status. Therefore, we acknowledged that and concluded that commercial air travel was the remaining option. Upon investigating the available flights back to the US, I was advised by my staff that the first available departing flight from Rome was Saturday, 10 Sep which would have resulted in an arrival sometime Sunday, 11 Sep. Before we committed to that, I asked my executive officer,

Colonel Starbuck, to check with Air Mobility Command (AMC) and find out if possibly I could get on a scheduled "channel" (strategic mobility aircraft traveling to or from Europe) aircraft passing through Sigonella NAS or Rhein Main AB—two arrival ports which they frequented in their routing. I would have been perfectly satisfied to ride on one of them with their attendant cargo back to the US—this is the way, in fact, we got to Europe (on a C-5).

This was a verbal, informal request. My executive officer was verbally advised a few days later that a C-141 would be at Naples Airport on 9 Sep and return me to the U.S. There seems to be a remaining question about a written request not being submitted or an intent to cover something up. That is simply not the case at all. We made an inquiry to see if there was another option to the commercial air travel option and were advised by the AMC Tanker-Airlift Control Center at Scott AFB IL, that the C-141 would be in Naples on 9 Sep. We were extremely busy with the ongoing activities and I personally gave this no further thought.

After the change of command ceremony at Naples, I and an enlisted aide, Airman Hart, changed clothes (me into a flight suit and Airman Hart into fatigues, picked up the family cat (which I had registered and paid the required \$85.00 fee for, in advance). We then proceeded to the Naples Airport in Colonel Starbuck's private auto for boarding and departure. Arriving at the airport, I was fully under

the impression that we would be riding on an aircraft with cargo--and that's why we dressed and prepared the way we did. I knew nothing about the configuration of the aircraft (i.e., the so called "comfort pallet") nor the origin or routing of the aircraft until I got on it. In fact, I did not know about the routing until several weeks later when this inquiry surfaced. I was under the assumption (until later) that the aircraft was returning from Europe where it had flown Ambassador Albright in Russia.

Regarding manifesting and the releasing of space available seats, since this was an AMC aircraft and it was their mission, I did not specifically ask about these. That is their business. But on every USAFE OSA aircraft on which I rode, we always made open seats available to space available passengers. That's the policy and my record speaks for itself in that regard. We arrived at the airplane and were told that there would be a short wait (I recollect it was 5-10 minutes). I waited in the lounge at the Navy facility and then boarded.

I understood there has also been a question regarding my involvement in allowing or not allowing space available passengers on board the aircraft. I was not asked or conferred with on this matter since it was an AMC aircraft and came under their policy purview. But I now understand some passengers were denied travel--an issue which I am told has since been reviewed by AMC and changed.

The aircraft landed at dusk on Friday evening. We were met by Customs inspectors and Generals Cuppens (Canada), Caruana (USAF) and Cook (USAF). The next morning at 0630, Brigadier General Peterson, Commander, Cheyenne Mountain Complex, picked me up and we proceeded to the scheduled training, returning in the early afternoon. The next day, at the request of the CSAF, my wife and I traveled to Washington DC for a promotion ceremony on Monday morning—officiated by General McPeak and attended by the Secretary of the Air Force and others. We returned that morning, and that evening I met with subordinate commanders from NORAD and US Space Command. The next morning, the change of command was officiated by the Chief of the Defence Staff, Canada, General De Chastelain; the vice chairman, Admiral Owens; and the Vice CSAF, General Moorman.

These are the facts as I know them. I hope this sets the record straight.

Sincerely

JOSEPH W. ASHY
General, USAF
Commander in Chief



DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
WASHINGTON DC 20330-1100



OCT 25, 1994

MEMORANDUM FOR GENERAL FOGLEMAN

FROM: SAF/PA

SUBJECT: News Media Activities Summary

Highlights of significant media activities:

a.

b. ARTICLE ON GEN ASHY MAY APPEAR IN NEWSWEEK: An article alleging fraud, waste and abuse involving Gen Ashy's Sept 9 flight from Naples, Italy, to Colorado Springs may appear in the Nov issue of Newsweek. According to AMC/PA, reporter David Hackwo received letters from two O-6s who may have been on a C-141 channel mission from Frankfurt, Germany, that picked up Gen As in Naples and flew him to Peterson AFB. The O-6s complained that two aerial refuelings took place enroute instead of landing for fuel. They also complained about Gen Ashy bringing his cat on flight. The O-6s have given permission to use their names but was not known whether they were Air Force.

↑
RONALD T. SCONYERS
Colonel, USAF
Director of Public Affairs

DPG-18
cc: AF/CV
AF/XO
AF/PE
AF/CVA
AF/DP
AF/JA
AF/CCX
AF/LG

Oct 25, 1994

MEMORANDUM FOR SECRETARY WIDNALL

FROM: SAF/PA

SUBJECT: News Media Activities Summary

Highlights of significant media activities:

a.

b. ARTICLE ON GEN ASHY MAY APPEAR IN NEWSWEEK: An article alleging fraud, waste and abuse involving Gen Ashy's Sept 9 flight from Naples, Italy, to Colorado Springs may appear in the Nov 1 issue of Newsweek. According to AMC/PA, reporter David Hackworth received letters from two O-6s who may have been on a C-141 channel mission from Frankfurt, Germany, that picked up Gen Ashy in Naples and flew him to Peterson AFB. The O-6s complained that two aerial refuelings took place enroute instead of landing for fuel. They also complained about Gen Ashy bringing his cat on the flight. The O-6s have given permission to use their names but it was not known whether they were Air Force.

RONALD T. SCONYERS
Colonel, USAF
Director of Public Affairs

cc: SAF/US
SAF/GC
SAF/AQ
SAF/MI
SAF/OSX
SAF/LL
SAF/IG



OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

Oct 28, 1994

MEMORANDUM FOR SECRETARY WIDNALL

FROM: SAF/PA

SUBJECT: Newsweek Interest in Gen Ashy Flight to U.S.

As we reported in our media activities memoranda earlier this week, Newsweek magazine has asked David Hackworth to investigate reports about the specific circumstances of General Ashy's flight from Naples, Italy, to Colorado Springs when he assumed command of USSPACECOM/AFSPACECOM/NORAD.


Hackworth plans to visit McGuire AFB and has asked to photograph AMC/CC's special C-141 aircraft (including the interior) used for the flight, and also requested to interview any of the aircrew members. He has also asked to see the airlift request form for the mission, and a civilian airline cost comparison.

AMC/PA, in coordination with AFSPACECOM/PA, is handling Hackworth's questions and these requests for information. Two pending questions are: Were any passengers or cargo carried on the aircraft from the U.S. to Naples, and; what is the total statute miles from Naples to Colorado Springs? At this point, this is what we have been told about the flight:

- General Ashy's change of command in Naples was not held until Sep 9 due to the delay in Lt Gen Ryan's congressional confirmation. General Ashy was required to be in Colorado Springs on Sep 10 to receive training and briefings required before he could assume his command positions. Therefore, a direct military flight was scheduled versus commercial transportation.

- AMC offered the AMC/CC aircraft. The only passengers on the aircraft were General Ashy, his military aide and his pet cat. General Ashy reimbursed the government for shipping the cat. The flight was designated "NOPA" -- no other passengers authorized -- but it is unclear who made that designation.

Hackworth says the story may appear in either the Nov 7 or 14 issue.


RONALD T. SCONYERS
Colonel, USAF
Director of Public Affairs

00001764

cc: SAF/US
SAF/IG
SAF/GC ✓



OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

14 NOV 1994

MEMORANDUM FOR GENERAL FOGLEMAN

FROM: SAF/PA

SUBJECT: Update on Newsweek Interest in Gen Ashy Flight to U.S.

We initially reported Newsweek's interest in General Ashy's flight from Naples to Colorado Springs in late October (Atch). As reported by AMC/PA, the latest developments are:

a. Reporter David Hackworth now says he may visit McGuire next week to view the comfort pallets.

b. Hackworth stated he has received calls from CBS's "60 Minutes" and ABC's "20/20" on the issue. No one in AMC/PA or SAF/PA has received any calls from these programs on this subject.

c. AMC/PA provided Hackworth the name of the steward stationed at Andrews AFB who flew on the mission, and relayed the steward's desire not to be interviewed.

d. AMC/PA confirmed that the second passenger aboard was General Ashy's enlisted aide, not a dependent as was mistakenly annotated on the passenger manifest.

e. AMC/PA also explained why the aircraft commander asked for a weight waiver take-off from Naples (contributing to the anonymous contention that the aircraft was carrying household goods). The request stemmed from a misprint in the AMC Airfield Suitability Report which lists the Naples airfield load bearing capacity at 166,000 pounds (an empty C-141 weighs nearly that much). The ASR was obviously incorrect and the waiver request was pro forma. AMC/PA reiterated that there were no household goods on board.

We will update you on this story as it develops.

Ron
RONALD T. SCONYERS
Colonel, USAF
Director of Public Affairs

Attachment
SAF/PA 28 Oct 94 Memo

cc: AF/CV
AF/JA

0000175



OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
WASHINGTON DC 20330-1000

MEMORANDUM FOR GEN T. COLEMAN

23 Nov 94

FROM: SAF/PA

SUBJECT: Update on Media Interest, AMC Airlift of Incoming CINC,
USSPACECOM

Yesterday, Newsweek reporter David Hackworth and ABC's 20/20 newsmagazine, led by anchor Lynn Scheer, visited McGuire AFB to followup on their stories reference AMC's PCS airlift of Gen Ashy, from Italy to Colorado on 9 September. Lt Col Randy Morger, HQ AMC/PA Deputy Director, escorted the ABC crew during their morning session and Mr. Hackworth in the afternoon.

Lt Col Morger's attached point paper identifies two totally different agendas. ABC's story angle is on 'glitz and glitter'; how it appears that AF senior leadership travels in style with their visuals centered on the C-141 comfort pallet. Mr. Hackworth's approach is much more thorough and investigative, with the emphasis clearly process-oriented. His thrust remains going step by step through exactly what happened.

We expect the ABC 20/20 story to air either on Friday, 9 Dec or the following Friday, 16 Dec. Further anticipate that the Newsweek article would appear during this same time period.

km
RONALD T. SCONYERS
Colonel, USAF
Director of Public Affairs

Atch
AMC/PA Point Paper

*Σin: We probably need to talk
about this & the direction it
is heading.*

00001487

POINT PAPER

SUBJECT: Update on Media Interest, AMC Airlift of Incoming CTNC of USSPACECOM

BACKGROUND:

- Reporter Dave Hackworth of Newsweek and ABC's 20/20 newsmagazine continue to develop stories on AMC's PCS airlift of 16 AF/CC from Italy to Colorado 9 Sept 94 to take command of SPACECOM.
- On 22 Nov, 305AMW provided both media access to McGuire to view comfort/DV pallets and C-141 #166 which flew the mission. Both talked in detail to enlisted crew members (two flight engineers and maintenance specialist) who agreed to be interviewed, had brief discussions with 305 AMW/CC, and interviewed the wing's 0-5 SAAM planning chief who also provided on-camera tour of pallets and aircraft.

DISCUSSION:

- Story angles for 20/20 and Newsweek are slightly different:

- ABC emphasizing the titillating, "R-HP" aspects (visuals dwell on kitchen, TV/VCR, stereo system, DV seats, etc.; reporter Lynn Sherr's stand-up in front of #166 took this tack: "This C-141 behind me at McGuire AFB is part of the Air Force's fleet of jets that carry the military's senior generals and other 'DVs,' and they do travel in style...")

- Hackworth's thrust is more serious. He's trying to build a case that this mission was improper, wasteful misuse of government resources. He dwelt on the money issues. (Example: About the C-141 stop at Andrews at end of mission to deplane steward, he said, "A vice-president at United tells me he'd fire any crew that landed somewhere to drop off one employee.")

- Newsweek intent on reporting entire decision process/chain that led to aircraft being dispatched. Reporter wants to know who got request from Naples, who approved it, and who tasked unit to fly mission.

- Reporter also highly suspicious of "cover up." Views the PCS of aircraft commander and loadmaster, long TDY (to SOS) of 0-3 scheduler, inability to talk to steward at Andrews, other details, as more than coincidence. Says, "I know two colonels (Wetzel and Starbuck) are being set up to 'take the fall' on this." Says, "Anonymous colonel tells me that if General Ashy goes down because of this, he's taking General Fogleman with him."

- Some positive aspects of McGuire support. Believe we have finally disabused reporters of allegations that: Mrs Ashy accompanied husband; aircraft loaded with household goods; Gen. Ashy gave order not to allow Space A pass; aircraft flew from McGuire to Andrews to pick up steward at start of mission; and the DV pallets were loaded specifically for General Ashy.

- Hackworth also taken aback when we pointed out that SECDEF 10 June 94 memo, "DoD Policy on the Use of Government Aircraft and Air Travel," is specifically written for TDY (not PCS) travel. Newsweek will now investigate rules surrounding PCS travel.

ACTION OFFICER: Lt Col Randy Morger/AMC/PAD/64502/23 November 1994

00001488

STATUS:

- Both outlets have follow-on questions.

— 20/20 asks for responses to following:

— (Referring to TDY/PCS travel) Are military travel request forms/commercial vs government travel cost comparisons specific to TDYs or do they apply to PCS of senior officials as well?

— Provide a comparison of costs/rates for C-141 training hours and DBOF-T tariff rate for DoD and non-DoD customers.

— AMC invited to provide written statement (in lieu of on-camera interview which we declined) on if/why command believes mission was justified.

— Newsweek requests:

— Information on decision trail within AMC in levying the airlift.

— Explanation of PCS travel regulations and if/how travel in this category differs from TDY travel.

- ABC 20/20 scheduling airing of its story either 9 or 16 Dec. Believe Newsweek will print its article same week.

- PA continuing to gather information to questions above for coordination and proposed response.

THIS FAX IS FROM ...

SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE

SAF/PA

OFFICE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

1690 Air Force Pentagon
Washington DC 20330-1690

To: Gen Fogleman
ORGANIZATION: ***EYES ONLY***EYES ONLY***EYES ONLY**

***SEE NOTE BELOW

Phone:

Fax:

From: Colonel Ron Sconyers, USAF
ORGANIZATION: Director of Public Affairs
Phone: DSN 227-6061, (703) 697-6061
Fax: DSN 224-5749, (703) 614-5749

Date: 12/04/94

Pages including
this cover page: 9

Comments: Sir On 20/20 Friday night, they promoted their next week's show as follows: "Join us next week with a subject about your money where you will learn the story of how General Joe Ashy (showed official photo) flew in this luxury airplane (showed interior of 166 with comfort pallet) with his female enlisted aide and cat named Nellie. Join 20/20 for this scandal."

Needless to say Gen and Mrs Ashy are extremely upset. I spent nearly two hours on the phone yesterday with the both of them. Mrs. Ashy thinks the implication will be some kind of sexual impropriety. (That has never been suggested to us in any way.) Of course, they received many phone calls from friends and relatives about this.

General Ashy feels like he has no top cover and that AMC has not done what they could have done to present the Ashy side of the story by "admitting that AMC was at fault in the way the plane was scheduled and the numerous glitches in the process along the way." To some degree, I have to agree. AMC, although they have provided the answers to most of the questions asked, has never really "fessed up" to making any mistakes here (if in fact mistakes were made.). (If we would have done that early on, and confirmed that we had reviewed and fixed processes that may have given the impression of wasting money, I don't think we would be this far with this story.)

** THE DOCUMENT WAS PROVIDED TO DODIG BY
THE MEDIA AND THE AIR FORCE

00003806

Appendix 6
Page 8 of 17

General Ashy has written a letter (copy attached--I'm not sure whether he wanted me to share this with you) he originally wanted to send to 20/20 to ensure they knew his role in this story, but has decided not to send it. (By the way, 20/20 is at Peterson AFB today shooting video of the base. They are being escorted by the Spacecom/PA and will be granted no on camera interviews.)

FYI, this 20/20 crew has been very belligerent with many of the people (if not all) that they have come into contact with, and are really digging. For example, Airman Hart, Gen Ashy's enlisted aide, has a mother with cancer. (That fits into their investigation because Airman Hart went on emergency leave shortly after returning to the states with Gen Ashy on the ill-fated flight. 20/20 actually called the ailing mother to confirm she was sick.) Also, when 20/20 interviewed Airman Hart on the telephone, they interrogated more than interviewed, and in fact brought her to tears.

General Ashy intends to discuss with you his concerns at Carlisle on Monday. He thinks we should put out an AF statement that provides him some support. That may not be a bad idea. Attached is a possible approach. This will air on Friday, so whatever COA we decide upon, we need to do it early in the week.

The other concern I am sure he will express is that this report will bring out a lot of other people who will write AF Times, Newsweek, 20/20, etc with other Gen Ashy stories and will open us to criticism from the GAO and Congress.

You and I have already discussed all of this, but I wanted to provide you this information so you are not surprised at Carlisle. Also attached is an advanced copy of the AF Times reporting. Not as good as the Stars and Stripes, but certainly OK in my mind.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'M. Kim' or similar, written in a cursive style.

Joseph W. Ashy, General, USAF
Commander in Chief
250 S Peterson Blvd Ste 116
Peterson AFB CO 80914-3010

Dear

You continue to ask a number of questions regarding my permanent change of station travel from Naples, Italy to Colorado Springs, CO when I became commander of NORAD, US Space Command, and USAF Space Command. As a uniformed public servant who has been in the service of the USA for 32 years, I clearly understand my responsibilities to be totally accountable. Here are the facts as I can best recall them.

I was confirmed for promotion and transfer to Peterson AFB, CO on 12 July 1994. My replacement, Lt Gen Mike Ryan, could not move to Naples and become Commander, AIRSOUTH (NATO) and Commander, 16th Air Force (USAFE) until his respective Senate confirmation. Thus, I could not depart due to my responsibilities in Allied Forces (NATO), South--principally because of the air operations we were conducting in the Adriatic and over Bosnia. When General Ryan's confirmation finally occurred on 26 Aug, he traveled to Naples arriving on 6 Sep 94. That permitted us one day (7 Sep) to discuss the two commands and their responsibilities. The change of command for 16th Air Force

was officiated by CINCUSAFE, General Jamerson, the next day at Aviano. Then, on 9 Sep, Admiral Smith officiated the AIRSOUTH change of command at Naples. The change of command at Peterson AFB had been scheduled for Tuesday morning, 13 Sep. It should be noted here that General Horner had been confirmed by the Senate for retirement on or before 30 Jun. So the foregoing events prompted the President to extend him past his active duty statutory service date. Therefore, the travel "window" was between early afternoon in Naples, 9 Sep 94 and the morning of 13 Sep at Peterson AFB, CO. In that period, I also had to receive required warning and attack assessment training at Cheyenne Mountain Complex so that I could fulfill my responsibilities to the national command authorities of Canada and the US as commander, NORAD.

Regarding travel options, my USAFE command had originally suggested that I return on a USAFE C-20. The vice commander, General Lorber, called me and advised that since a C-20 is in the operational support aircraft (OSA) category, it was not permissible to utilize it in a permanent change of station status. Therefore, we acknowledged that and concluded that commercial air travel was the remaining option. Upon investigating the available flights back to the US, I was advised by my staff that the first available departing flight from Rome was Saturday, 10 Sep which would have resulted in an arrival sometime Sunday, 11 Sep. Before we committed to that, I asked my executive officer,

Colonel Starbuck, to check with Air Mobility Command (AMC) and find out if possibly I could get on a scheduled "channel" (strategic mobility aircraft traveling to or from Europe) aircraft passing through Sigonella NAS or Rhein Main AB-- two arrival ports which they frequented in their routing. I would have been perfectly satisfied to ride on one of them with their attendant cargo back to the US--this is the way. In fact, we got to Europe (on a C-5).

This was a verbal, informal request. My executive officer was verbally advised a few days later that a C-141 would be at Naples Airport on 9 Sep and return me to the U.S. There seems to be a remaining question about a written request not being submitted or an intent to cover something up. That is simply not the case at all. We made an inquiry to see if there was another option to the commercial air travel option and were advised by the AMC Tanker-Airlift Control Center at Scott AFB IL, that the C-141 would be in Naples on 9 Sep. We were extremely busy with the ongoing activities and I personally gave this no further thought.

After the change of command ceremony at Naples, I and an enlisted aide, Airman Hart, changed clothes (me into a flight suit and Airman Hart into fatigues, picked up the family cat (which I had registered and paid the required \$85.00 fee for, in advance). We then proceeded to the Naples Airport in Colonel Starbuck's private auto for boarding and departure. Arriving at the airport, I was fully under

the impression that we would be riding on an aircraft with cargo--and that's why we dressed and prepared the way we did. I knew nothing about the configuration of the aircraft (i.e., the so called "comfort pallet") nor the origin or routing of the aircraft until I got on it. In fact, I did not know about the routing until several weeks later when this inquiry surfaced. I was under the assumption (until later) that the aircraft was returning from Europe where it had flown Ambassador Albright in Russia.

Regarding manifesting and the releasing of space available seats, since this was an AMC aircraft and it was their mission, I did not specifically ask about these. That is their business. But on every USAFE OSA aircraft on which I rode, we always made open seats available to space available passengers. That's the policy and my record speaks for itself in that regard. We arrived at the airplane and were told that there would be a short wait (I recollect it was 5-10 minutes). I waited in the lounge at the Navy facility and then boarded.

I understood there has also been a question regarding my involvement in allowing or not allowing space available passengers on board the aircraft. I was not asked or conferred with on this matter since it was an AMC aircraft and came under their policy purview. But I now understand some passengers were denied travel--an issue which I am told has since been reviewed by AMC and changed.

The aircraft landed at dusk on Friday evening. We were met by Customs Inspectors and Generals Cuppens (Canada), Caruana (USAF) and Cook (USAF). The next morning at 0630, Brigadier General Peterson, Commander, Cheyenne Mountain Complex, picked me up and we proceeded to the scheduled training, returning in the early afternoon. The next day, at the request of the CSAF, my wife and I traveled to Washington DC for a promotion ceremony on Monday morning—officiated by General McPeak and attended by the Secretary of the Air Force and others. We returned that morning, and that evening I met with subordinate commanders from NORAD and US Space Command. The next morning, the change of command was officiated by the Chief of the Defence Staff, Canada, General De Chastelain; the vice chairman, Admiral Owens; and the Vice CSAF, General Moorman.

These are the facts as I know them. I hope this sets the record straight.

Sincerely

JOSEPH W. ASHY
General, USAF
Commander in Chief

Mr. Don Thrasher
Producer, 20/20
147 Columbus, Ninth Floor
New York, New York, 10023

Dear Mr. Thrasher

In reference to your report concerning the travel of the Commander-in-Chief of US Space Command, General Joe Ashy, from Naples, Italy to Peterson AFB, Colorado, 9 Sep 94, any categorization of this as a scandal or cover-up or any other charge of fraud, waste or abuse of Air Force aircraft or America's tax dollars presents an image far from the truth.

General Ashy played no personal role in any of the administrative or operational processes which resulted in his transport back to the United States. He simply had his staff inquire into the availability of military airlift from Naples to Peterson AFB. As that process unfolded, many people along the chain of command worked hard to support this request.

In their zeal, were decisions made that in hindsight give THE APPEARANCE of impropriety? Yes, but all decisions were will within the bounds of the existing regulations.

Were there, in fact, regulations broken? Absolutely not!

Have we reviewed every process in the chain of events that resulted in your story? Yes, and we have corrected procedures that will eliminate such questions in the future.

Did we waste taxpayer dollars? No, valuable training was received by all the airlift and tanker crews. These crews would have been flying missions anyway to maintain and improve proficiency

Could we have done this smarter? Yes, and the procedures we now have in place will ensure smarter and more informed decisions in the future.

I trust this will put your report into better perspective.

Fogleman

MEMORANDUM FOR SECRETARY WIDNALL

FROM: SAF/PA

SUBJECT: Update on Newsweek Interest in Gen Ashy Flight to U.S.

Media interest in General Ashy's flight from Naples to Colorado Springs is growing as evidenced by recent articles in The Stars and Stripes and AIR FORCE TIMES (Atch). We anticipate reporter David Hackworth's investigative story will also appear in Newsweek magazine a week from today. The latest developments are:

a. ABC's "20/20" will air a segment on the issue of general officer travel and directly address General Ashy's travel. AMC/PA and AFSPACECOM/PA have received calls from "20/20." ABC film crews visited McGuire and Peterson AFBs to shoot background footage for the segment. Additionally, "20/20" and Newsweek conducted a telephone interview with General Ashy's enlisted aide who was also on the flight from Naples.

b. SAF/LL has received a query by a congressional staffer on the HASC who had seen the AIR FORCE TIMES article in today's Early Bird.

c. We understand there is a possibility "60 Minutes" may also have an interest in the story. So far, we have not received any calls from the show's producers on this subject.

Currently there is no investigation underway of General Ashy's travel from Naples to Colorado Springs. We will continue to update you on this story as it develops.

RONALD T. SCONYERS
Colonel, USAF
Director of Public Affairs

3 Attachments:

1. News Clips
2. SAF/PA Nov 14, 1994 Memo
3. SAF/PA Oct 28, 1994 Memo

cc: SAF/US
SAF/IG
SAF/GC

FROM: SAF/PA

SUBJECT: News Media Activities Summary

Highlights of significant media activities:

Page 2

00001807

a. GAZETTE TELEGRAPH ARTICLE ON GENERAL ASHY: Media interest in General Ashy's flight from Naples to Colorado Springs is growing as evidenced by recent articles in The Stars and Stripes and Air Force Times. We anticipate reporter David Hackworth's investigative story will appear in Newsweek magazine next week. A Dec 8 story written by Genevieve Anton, a reporter for Colorado Springs' Gazette Telegraph (atch.), notes that Air Force officials said the C-141 crew turned away Air Force retirees asking to ride as Space A passengers. Anton also reported that an Air Mobility Command spokesman said Gen. Ashy did not request a special plane or amenities, and had no control over the decision.

b.

c. i

RONALD T. SCONYERS
Colonel, USAF
Director of Public Affairs

Attachment:
Article from Colorado Springs Gazette Telegraph

cc: SAF/US SAF/OSX SAF/IAQ SAF/MI
SAF/GC SAF/LL SAF/AG



SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE
WASHINGTON

DEC 09 1994

The Honorable Charles E. Grassley
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510-1501

Dear Senator Grassley:

I am in receipt of the letter you sent to the DoD/IG requesting an investigation into the use of military aircraft to transport General Joseph Ashy to assume his new role as USCINCSpace. We stand ready to assist in this matter and look forward to the findings.

However, let me express my personal outrage at the possible consequences of the tone underlying your questions regarding the presence on the aircraft of General Ashy's aide, Senior Airman Christina Hart. I would ask you to clarify this aspect of your inquiry. I am sure you did not mean to challenge, nor call into question, the personal or professional integrity of the Senior Airman assigned to the General as an enlisted aide, or indeed to question the appropriateness of women in the Air Force or women in any of the uniformed military services carrying out a variety of professional roles. As you may know, 99.6 percent of all positions in the Air Force are open to women and they serve with credibility and distinction in all of them. Of our new enlisted recruits, close to 25 percent are now women.

We depend upon and indeed have every reason to expect that all Air Force people carry out their responsibilities with total dedication and professionalism. In today's Air Force, women are assigned to responsible positions at every level and it is important that they be allowed to do their job in an environment that is free from unfounded innuendo or gossip. Without this level of trust, I fear that some of the most challenging and career building positions within the military services will remain unavailable to women. I am concerned that your questions as currently formulated will directly undercut the ability of women in the military services to successfully pursue their chosen career specialties. I have often said "the sky's the limit in the Air Force"; I am personally pledged to do all I can to ensure that reality.

Sincerely,